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FEB 10 1914

# THE NATION AND THE EMPIRE

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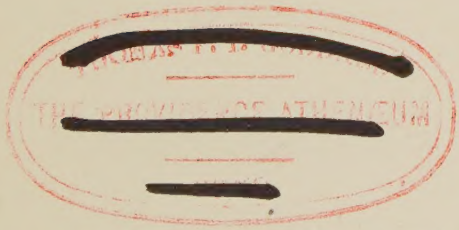
Being a Collection of Speeches and Addresses: with an Introduction by

LORD MILNER, G.C.B

WITHDRAWN from the
collection of the
PROVIDENCE ATHENÆUM



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WITHDRAWN from the
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PROVIDENCE ATHENÆUM

FEB 10 1914

TO MY OLD FRIEND

CHARLES W. BOYD

WHO WAS THE FIRST TO URGE UPON ME

THE PUBLICATION OF MY SPEECHES

AND WHO GENEROUSLY UNDERTOOK THE LABORIOUS TASK

OF SELECTING, ARRANGING, AND ANNOTATING

SUCH OF THEM AS ARE HERE REPRODUCED

I DEDICATE THIS VOLUME

WHICH BUT FOR HIS STIMULATING INFLUENCE

AND DEVOTED AID

WOULD NEVER HAVE COME INTO EXISTENCE

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*'Une nation est une âme, un principe spirituel. Deux choses qui, à vrai dire, ne font qu'une, constituent cette âme, ce principe spirituel. L'une est dans le passé, l'autre dans le présent. L'une est la possession d'un riche legs de souvenirs, l'autre le consentement actuel, le désir de vivre ensemble, la volonté de faire valoir l'héritage qu'on a reçu indivis. Un passé héroïque, des grands hommes, de la gloire (j'entends la véritable), voilà le capital social sur lequel on assied une idée nationale. Avoir des gloires communes dans le passé, une volonté commune dans le présent, avoir fait des grandes choses ensemble, vouloir en faire encore, voilà la condition essentielle pour être un peuple. On aime en proportion des sacrifices qu'on a faits, des maux qu'on a soufferts. On aime la maison, qu'on a bâtie et qu'on transmet. Le chant spartiate "Nous sommes ce que vous fûtes, nous serons ce que vous êtes," c'est dans sa simplicité l'hymne abrégé de toute patrie.'*—RENAN.

# INTRODUCTION

THE speeches and addresses contained in this volume cover a period of sixteen years—from the date of my appointment as High Commissioner for South Africa to the present time. The majority of them are just occasional speeches, such as any public man is constantly obliged to make—often with inadequate preparation and sometimes with none—to deal with an incident arising in the course of his work, or with the latest phase of a controversy in which he may happen to be engaged. In a few cases only, such as the Manchester Speech of December 1906 (pp. 135-152) or the series of addresses delivered in Canada in 1908 (pp. 302-365), was I in a position to develop my ideas in a more or less complete and systematic manner. Under these circumstances, anything of more lasting value which the book may contain is necessarily embedded in a good deal of matter of merely transitory interest. Whatever unity there may be in such a series of incidental and fragmentary discourses can only be a unity of spirit, due to the fact that, throughout all these years, and indeed for a much longer period, my public activities have been dominated by a single desire —that of working for the integrity and consolidation of the British Empire. I should be the last to claim that I have always been successful in keeping this, my main object, free from entanglement with secondary and more questionable political aims. But I have at least always tried to do so. And in judging of the measure of my success or failure it is fair to bear in mind the special difficulties with which, in the present stage of our constitutional development, any man, who aspires to be a servant of the Empire, has to contend.

An interesting discussion, initiated by my friend Mr.

E. B. Sargent, was carried on for some months last year in the columns of *United Empire* on the meaning of the words 'British citizenship.' The upshot appeared to be that, strictly speaking, there was no such thing as citizenship of the Empire. It is correct to speak of a 'British subject.' That term applies to the vast majority of those who are born, and to all those who are naturalised, in any of the dominions of our sovereign. But 'British citizen' is, according to the jurists, only a 'rhetorical expression,' at any rate in the sense in which it is commonly used, as signifying membership of a body-politic coextensive with those dominions. And yet men exist, and happily in increasing numbers, who are conscious of such membership, who mean something definite when they say that the Empire is their 'country,' the State to which they feel themselves to belong, and to which their highest allegiance is due. The Crown is in their eyes a sacred symbol of a bond, a fellowship, which may be based upon, but does not end with, subjection to a common sovereign. Loyalty to the Empire is to them the supreme political duty. The existence, the growth, the potency of this sentiment is a momentous fact, though legal and juridical conceptions may not have expanded to correspond with it, and no word has yet been coined to describe membership of the body-politic towards which that loyalty is felt. The barbarous term 'Britisher' is perhaps an attempt in that direction, but, besides being barbarous, it is not wide enough. For the time being we must, despite the jurists, fall back upon 'citizen of the Empire,' for want of a better phrase.

But loyalty to the Empire, however inspiring as a motive of action, is not easy to practise at the present time. And it never will be, as long as the conception of the Empire as a single State is not embodied in any institutions other than the Crown. In actual fact there is no such thing as an 'Imperial Service,' which any man can enter. In a sense indeed the service of a part is the service of the whole, if one chooses so to regard it. But that is a matter of individual feeling. Strictly speaking, the public servant

in any part of the Empire belongs, under the King, to the particular government which has appointed him, and no one of the King's governments, not even the British, is in reality a government of the whole Empire. There are no doubt certain officers of State, the British Prime Minister for instance, or the Foreign Secretary, the scope of whose authority is so wide, that they may almost be regarded as Imperial officers. But it is not essential that they should so regard themselves, or should discharge their duties in that spirit. They may owe their positions entirely to their pre-eminence in the local politics of the United Kingdom. They might retain them, even if all the rest of the Empire thoroughly disapproved of their line of action.

Still greater is the difficulty of serving the Empire as a private citizen, however much a man may desire to do so—I mean, of course, of serving it by direct political action. We can all serve it indirectly by cultivating Imperial sentiment, or simply by living useful and honourable lives. But in that sense any man may serve any community of which he is a member. I am speaking now of service more immediate and tangible—of activity in the sphere of public life. In that sphere the service of the Empire is beset by pitfalls, for in every part of it the same men and the same bodies are dealing now with local and now with Imperial affairs, and while the latter may be essentially the more important, it is dexterity in the former which spells success and power. And no doubt the successful local politician may turn out to have the qualities of an Imperial statesman. Fortunately he sometimes does. But he may equally well be quite deficient in the breadth of view and width of sympathy which are requisite for the handling of Imperial affairs. And in any case, whatever his own capacity and inclination, he is never free to deal with those affairs on their merits. They are, for him, inevitably mixed up with the local party game. And until the two classes of questions can be dealt with by separate authorities, this always must be so.

And meanwhile what are the opportunities before any man in a humbler position who yet desires, as a good

'citizen of the Empire,' to take his part in Imperial affairs? He may write academic treatises, which nobody will read. He may join associations 'of a non-party character,' to promote this or that object of Imperial interest, and help to pass platonic resolutions, which will be as water on a duck's back to the Minister to whom they are forwarded. But if he desires to achieve anything practical, he must throw in his lot with some political party, and earn, by vigorous swashbuckling in the field of party politics, for which he may have neither aptitude nor liking, the chance of occasionally being listened to on the questions which he really cares about and understands.

Do not let me be thought to suggest that Imperial affairs are necessarily of greater dignity and importance than local affairs, or that a man is better employed in concerning himself with the former rather than with the latter. The word 'Imperial' has an imposing sound, but not every question properly so described is necessarily of the first importance. And on the other hand there may be local controversies, in any part of the Empire, which are of supreme moment to the welfare of that part, and even of the whole. I have no idea of extolling interest in the one, or depreciating interest in the other. The point is, that Imperial and local affairs are different in character, and that the same men are not generally, or often, equally well qualified, by inclination and experience, to deal with both. A system, which makes successful activity in the one sphere the only avenue to influence in the other, involves enormous waste.

And that is not the only, or the greatest evil arising from the present subordination of Imperial to local politics. Its worst consequence is that it carries the corroding influence of party spirit into a region in which existing party divisions are wholly out of place. Those divisions owe their origin to conflicts of opinion about domestic questions. It is true that they have a tendency, even in the field of their origin, to outlive the differences of principle from which they sprang, and that the party fight thus becomes a mere

scramble for power. It is true that in that scramble men are constantly compelled to sacrifice their convictions to the imperious call of party discipline. But with regard to domestic questions, or at least some of them, party distinctions still have some vestige of meaning. With regard to almost any Imperial question they have absolutely none. And yet no sooner does any Imperial problem assume a character of real urgency, no sooner does it pass out of the region of theoretical discussion into that of practical politics, than it is almost certain to become the shuttlecock of party. For the Government of the day is then obliged to take some line about it. That line may be determined by all sorts of considerations having very little to do with the matter itself. But whatever line the Government takes, the leaders of the Opposition will be tempted to cast about for a different line, and it is ten to one that they will be successful in their quest. And the rank and file on either side will feel in duty bound to follow, though it is out of all reason to suppose that if left to form a genuine opinion—on an entirely new subject—they would find themselves arrayed in two conflicting groups, precisely coinciding with the two normal parties. And this edifying process is likely to be going on simultaneously in every part of the Empire, which enjoys the blessing of Parliamentary government, with regard to every new question of urgency that affects them all. The result may be good or bad. It is hardly likely to be good. But whatever it may be, it will certainly not be the same result, which would be arrived at, if men everywhere were considering the question on its merits. In that case there would often be general agreement, where we now have artificial differences and bitter controversy. And even if the question was one which aroused real differences of opinion, men would take sides over it in accordance with their genuine views about the matter itself, and not on the lines of pre-existing, and in this connection meaningless, party divisions. The decision would then at least represent the true opinion, right or wrong, of a majority of the citizens of the Empire. That opinion

would not, as now, be liable to be distorted and submerged in a whirlpool of ulterior motives and irrelevant prejudices.

This is not a fancy picture. The reality of the evils just described can be illustrated by what has happened, and is even now happening, with regard to matters of supreme importance to the whole Empire. Let us look at two questions, the magnitude of which is beyond dispute—the development of inter-Imperial trade, and the naval defence of all His Majesty's dominions. How have these fared when proposals affecting them, which were at least intended to promote the common good, and therefore entitled to dispassionate consideration, have been brought into the arena of local party politics ?

Take first the Trade question. Ten years ago Mr. Chamberlain, holding, as he did, a unique position in the eyes of the whole British world, regarded everywhere as an essentially Imperial and not merely a British statesman, propounded to the people of the United Kingdom a new departure in commercial policy, expressly designed to increase the economic interdependence of the different parts of the Empire. For he believed, as all statesmen have believed in all ages but the present, and still believe in every country but our own, that the bond of mutually profitable trade is a powerful factor in promoting political unity. But the particular measures, which he advocated with that end in view, gave a great shock to the fiscal principles, which had for some time past been generally accepted in Great Britain. That his proposals should meet with opposition, and give rise to controversy, was perfectly natural and indeed inevitable. And had the controversy, which was certain to arise, been conducted on anything like rational lines, the result, whether favourable or unfavourable to the proposals themselves, might have been of great public advantage. It is always well for any community to review from time to time the traditional foundations of its policy, and consider whether the reasons which led to the adoption of that policy still hold good, or whether altered circumstances make them no longer valid. And in the particular case under discussion

there were exceptionally strong grounds for a reconsideration of the principles of our British fiscal system. The growth of other parts of the Empire, and especially of the self-governing Dominions, had immensely increased their importance to us, as markets for our goods, to say nothing of their political importance as pillars of the Imperial fabric. But at the same time their ideas about trade and taxation diverged widely from those prevalent in Great Britain. All more or less Protectionist, and resolved to favour the products of their own industry in the competition with imported goods, the Dominions were nevertheless agreed in giving, among imports, an advantage to those coming from other parts of the Empire as against those brought from foreign countries. And they were also agreed, and very strongly, in the desire that the same principle—discrimination between goods of foreign and goods of British Imperial origin—should be adopted by the Mother Country. How that might be done—it was admittedly difficult—and whether the Mother Country could afford to do it at all, were necessarily, as they all recognised, questions for the people of Great Britain alone to decide. Their contention only came to this, that, if the Mother Country did see her way to take a step in the desired direction, the consequences, not merely in the increase of trade and intercourse, but in the promotion of closer political relationship, would be momentous. On that point they were all unanimous, and the strength of their conviction on the subject was impressive.

The situation thus created was clearly one which demanded the earnest attention of British statesmen. Mr. Chamberlain was, alike by his official position and by his personal sympathies, in close touch with the feelings of the people of the Dominions. In his constant striving to bind them by every possible tie to the Mother Country and to one another, he was gradually converted to their view about the best means of developing inter-Imperial trade, and led to propose a modification of the British fiscal system. Whatever the merits or defects of that proposal, its object was

undoubtedly laudable. It was prompted by motives of Imperial patriotism. By no possibility could it serve any partisan purpose, indeed its author must have been well aware of the risk which it involved to his party, and to his own position as a party leader. Perhaps he hoped that in breaking entirely fresh ground he would open a new era in our political life, and that, if he failed to convince some of his own associates, he would, on the broad Imperial issue, gain the support of the mass of his fellow-countrymen, irrespective of party. But the sequel was destined to show the impossibility, under present conditions, of keeping party considerations from exercising a decisive influence upon the fate of any political movement however novel, however remote from current topics of party controversy.

To start such a movement effectively required the intervention of a man of first-rate eminence in public life, of a party leader. No mere theorist or philosopher, however able, no old public servant, however distinguished, no political free-lance, however bold, could have got the British people to take the proposed innovation seriously. 'There is no pain like the pain of a new idea,' and if the man in the street is to tolerate such an intrusion on his peace of mind, it must come to him with the authority of one of those familiar names, which a thousand speeches and leading articles have taught him to love or to execrate. But unfortunately the sponsorship, which is necessary to give the new idea a chance of being seriously considered at all, is likely at the same time to cause the consideration of it, from the very outset, to be tainted with bias. And that was the fate of the scheme of Imperial Preference propounded by Mr. Chamberlain. It burst like a bombshell in the camp of his friends, causing a deep cleavage of opinion, which still remains, though in the long run the majority of them bowed to his authority and accepted it. But their assent was in many cases born of loyalty rather than of conviction, and Mr. Chamberlain's policy was sometimes ill served by the advocacy of men who had not fully grasped its principle and its object, and who clung to the letter of his proposals without appreciating their spirit. And,

on the other hand, his political opponents fell upon those proposals tooth and nail, because they were his. 'Theirs not to reason why,' nor to pause and consider what effect might be produced upon the growing sentiment of Imperial loyalty in the Dominions by the unmeasured denunciation of a policy, which owed its origin to that sentiment on their part, with which they all sympathised, and which had been adopted by Mr. Chamberlain for the express purpose of creating a basis of economic co-operation between them and the Mother Country. Considerations of this nature could not be expected to weigh with party politicians, when they saw an opportunity of tripping up a formidable adversary. Mr. Chamberlain's own followers were divided. Some features of his scheme were unpopular to begin with, and could easily be made more so by the unscrupulous exaggeration in which party pugilists delight. It was the chance of a lifetime. And so the broad and far-reaching question of principle, which Mr. Chamberlain had raised, was hardly discussed. The reasons, and they were grave reasons, which had led him to risk everything for the adoption of Imperial Preference, were treated as of no account. All the rhetorical batteries of the Opposition were concentrated upon those details of his scheme which lent themselves to the creation of unreasoning prejudice and exaggerated alarm. A duty which might, or might not, have added ¼d. to the price of the quartern loaf, was represented as threatening millions of people with famine. The idea, that closer commercial relations between the different parts of the Empire were of value in promoting amity and co-operation in other respects, was denounced as reliance on 'sordid bonds.' But I have no wish to go at length into the history of this unhappy controversy. I only refer to it to illustrate the troubles which spring from our having no proper forum for the discussion of Imperial relations. All that happened in this case was bound to happen, the moment that the new issue raised by Mr. Chamberlain was sucked into the vortex of our local party struggle. It was inevitable, under these circumstances, that discussion should rage over those aspects of it which were of immediate electioneering value, and

that the wider and more important question of principle should be smothered in the hubbub.

And the consequence is that the people of Great Britain have never yet had a fair chance of looking at the policy of Preference in an atmosphere unclouded by the dust of the party scrimmage. They have been led to take sides, in the main on party lines, with regard to a particular proposal—for or against the imposition of certain customs duties, and especially of one such duty—that of 2s. a quarter on foreign wheat—the importance of which has been enormously exaggerated on both sides. But the principle of Imperial Preference does not stand or fall with the approval or rejection of that or of any particular duty: indeed it is not confined to the domain of Customs at all. Neither is there anything in the principle itself which should make it acceptable to a man because he is a Conservative or inacceptable because he is a Liberal. The first practical step towards the realisation of it was taken in Canada by a Liberal government. It has found favour in Australia and New Zealand with parties and governments more Liberal, and indeed more Radical, than any which have ever been in power in the United Kingdom. Why should it have come to be regarded as a doctrine, which every Liberal in the United Kingdom is bound to abhor? The answer can only be found in the accidents of party warfare, which have prevented him from approaching the subject with an open mind. With the solitary but memorable exception of Mr. Lloyd George, who at the Colonial Conference of 1907 paid an eloquent tribute to the principle of Preference, which has unfortunately never been followed by practical action,[1] the party at present in power have

[1] 'We heartily concur,' Mr. Lloyd George said, 'in the view which has been presented by the Colonial Ministers, that the Empire would be a great gainer if much of the products now purchased from foreign countries could be produced and purchased within the Empire. In Britain we have the greatest market in the world. We are the greatest purchasers of produce raised or manufactured outside our own boundaries. A very large proportion of this produce could very well be raised in the Colonies, and any reasonable and workable plan that would tend to increase the proportion of the produce which is bought by us from the Colonies, and by the Colonies from us and from each other, must necessarily enhance the resources of the Empire as a whole. A considerable part of the surplus

displayed a total inability to look beyond the particular proposals made by Mr. Chamberlain. The result can only be to give the impression that something like half the people of the United Kingdom are resolutely opposed to any attempt to consolidate the Empire by reciprocal concessions in respect of trade, and are therefore in direct conflict, on this subject, with the cherished opinions of their kith and kin across the seas. If this were indeed the case, it would be a great disaster. But no man is entitled by anything that has yet happened to say that it is the case. For my own part I firmly believe that this impression is a false one, and that on the broad question, whether it is or is not right and wise deliberately to direct as much trade as possible into Imperial channels, and to aim at making the Empire economically self-sufficient, there is no conflict between the sentiment of the majority of the British people and the sentiment of Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. It is one thing to dissent from a particular method of promoting Imperial in preference to foreign trade, quite another to be out of sympathy with that object altogether. Personally I hold that even the particular proposals made by Mr. Chamberlain have never received unbiased consideration. But it is perfectly certain that his fundamental idea has been so obscured by the mists of party controversy, that it has never had a chance of being generally understood, and that in consequence many opportunities of increasing trade and intercourse within the Empire have been and are being thrown away.

Turning now from the question of Imperial Trade to that of Imperial Defence, let us cast a glance at what is at present going on in Canada. Here is an even clearer illustration of the effect of party divisions in creating artificial conflicts

population of the United Kingdom, which now goes to foreign lands in search of a livelihood, might then find it to its profit to pitch its tents somewhere under the Flag, and the Empire would gain in riches of material and of men. *We agree with our Colonial comrades, that all this is worth concerted efforts, even if the effort at the outset costs us something. The federation of free Commonwealths is worth making some sacrifice for. One never knows when its strength may be essential to the great cause of human freedom, and that is priceless.*'—(Minutes of the Proceedings of the Colonial Conference, 1907. Cd. 3523, p. 362.)

of opinion over a matter with which they have really nothing to do, and thereby stultifying the desires of a whole people. For whatever may be, or might be, the true opinion of the people of the United Kingdom about Imperial Preference, there can be no doubt what the majority of Canadians wish to see their country doing with regard to the naval defence of the Empire. Their minds are seriously bent upon taking an effective share in that defence, and on setting about it in no half-hearted or niggardly fashion. This feeling is not confined to the party at present in office, who are practically unanimous on the subject. It is equally strong in a large section, perhaps the majority, of the party at present in Opposition. For even the French Canadians on the Opposition side, though undoubtedly less enthusiastic about a naval policy than their British confederates, are yet by no means intractable with regard to it. There is no doubt a stubborn minority, which is keen to prevent anything being done. But the bulk of the French-Canadian Liberals were prepared only two years ago to accept with a good grace the naval programme put forward by their own party leaders. On the whole, it may truly be said that there is as large a measure of agreement, among Canadians generally, in favour of doing something substantial to increase the strength of the Empire at sea, as can ever reasonably be hoped for on any question of such magnitude and novelty in a community naturally disputatious, as all democratic British communities are.

But does it follow that something substantial will be done? By no means. The mind of the nation may be made up. The majority of its members may be essentially agreed. But this general agreement as to the end may nevertheless be defeated by a party squabble over the means. At the outset, for a brief moment, the working of the political machine reflected the general agreement. Little more than three years ago the Parliament at Ottawa passed a unanimous resolution in favour of participation by Canada in the naval defence of the Empire. But then the question was brand-new, and the demon of party-spirit had not had time to make havoc of it. He is very ingenious in setting people by the

ears and in inducing them, even when they want the same thing, to fall out over the way of doing it, and so grievously to exaggerate their differences of opinion about methods, that in the end they care more about their conflicting plans for attaining the common object, than they do about the object itself. This is precisely the danger which threatens the Navy Question in Canada at the present time. The game of manœuvring for position, with a view to the next General Election, is in full swing. And thus many politicians are busy trying to persuade themselves, and a reluctant country, that there is some vital and essential difference between the policy of the two parties with regard to naval defence. As a matter of fact there is no such vital difference at all. The only real antagonism is between the great majority of Canadians, who want to see something done, and the minority, who do not. Among the former there are no doubt many differences of view with regard to details. There are many shades of opinion, but there is nothing like a genuine contrast of two opposite convictions, miraculously coincident with the line of party cleavage. The Conservatives are not in principle opposed to 'a Canadian Navy,' and they are quite as anxious as the Liberals that, whatever Canada does for the defence of the Empire, she should do not as a tributary but as a partner State. The Liberals, for all their nervousness about 'autonomy,' are just as desirous as the Conservatives that the Canadian Navy should help to strengthen the Empire and not merely to defend Canada. There is thus plenty of material for agreement on a common national policy, and all the more so as the present Prime Minister of the Dominion has shown himself capable of dealing with this big question on big lines, and has impressed not only Canada but the whole Empire by his largeness of view and sincerity of purpose. But in spite of these favourable circumstances, it is only too likely that the question will continue to be made the occasion for an embittered party fight, and that the Empire will lose, if not the material assistance, at any rate the still more valuable moral support, which hearty and unanimous action on

the part of Canada would have given it. Such a result would no doubt be contrary to the desires of the best men of both parties, and it would misrepresent the true feeling of the Canadian people, who are not by any means divided, on this subject, into two hostile camps of nearly equal numbers, and who will detest being made to appear thus divided to the outside world. There have been many evidences of the feeling of repulsion with which they would regard such a spectacle. Before the opening of Parliament last autumn, memorials bearing the signatures of influential men of both political parties were addressed from various parts of Canada to the Premier and the leader of the Opposition, urging them to meet in conference on the Navy Question and to try and arrange a settlement, which would obviate a party fight. And since Mr. Borden has unfolded his scheme, there have been repeated attempts, both in and out of Parliament, to arrive at a compromise which might give expression to the substantial unanimity of the bulk of the Canadian people—to their genuine desire to discharge, by whatever means, their duty to the Empire. There is something pathetic in this effort of a sincere and noble popular sentiment to escape from being distorted and mutilated by the normal operation of the party machine. But there is nothing novel or surprising in such an experience. Laocoon wrestling with the serpents is no unfitting symbol of the desperate struggle which Imperial patriotism has to maintain against the hydras of particularism and party spirit that everywhere enlace and threaten to throttle it.

Not that the Imperial Movement is destined to meet with the fate of Laocoon. Its vitality is far too great and persistent. The Imperialists of my generation have indeed met with many discouragements. They have seen chance after chance thrown away. Over and over again questions of great Imperial interest have been pushed off the board to make room for matters of infinitely minor importance, or, worse still, have been used as footballs in the party scrimmage. Imperial interests have suffered grievously from neglect; they have suffered even more from the

wrong sort of attention. And yet Imperial sentiment and interest in Imperial problems, a sense of the solidarity of the scattered communities of the British race, have been growing steadily all the time. It is this fact, which gives hope of a better future, especially if we bear in mind that the distresses of the present time are due largely to defects of machinery—to our obsolete arrangements for the conduct of Imperial affairs. But where good-will and a right spirit exist, such defects cannot be incapable of remedy.

And, as a matter of fact, the remedy is not far to seek, though our deep-seated dislike of fundamental change makes us slow to face it. Essentially what is wanted is discrimination—the separation of Imperial from local interests in the sphere of politics and administration. The present chaotic jumble is injurious to both, but it is Imperial interests which are the greatest sufferers. They suffer from the lack of time and energy to devote to them on the part of Parliaments and Governments absorbed in other business. They suffer even more fatally from their entanglement with local politics. And yet the local autonomy, which all communities of the British race cherish, and justly cherish, so much—the right to manage or mismanage their own affairs, free from external interference—depends ultimately upon their capacity to stand together and present a united front to any possible aggressor. But for that end we require an Imperial Constitution, providing for the separation of those branches of public business which, like Foreign Affairs, Defence and Ocean Communications, are essentially Imperial, from those which are mainly or wholly local, and for the management of the former by a new authority, representative of all parts of the Empire, but undistracted by the work and the controversies which are peculiar to any single part. We have already, in the United Kingdom, differentiated downwards, by relegating to new organs of government, such as Borough and County Councils, a great many duties formerly performed, or not performed, by the central Government. And the effect has undoubtedly been salutary. We have yet to differentiate upwards,

throughout the Empire by entrusting to a body constituted *ad hoc* the matters of common interest, which are at present partially and spasmodically managed, or wholly neglected, by the so-called 'Imperial' Parliament and the Government dependent on it, and to some, though to a much smaller extent, by the Parliaments and Governments of the Dominions. When that day comes, it does not indeed follow that Imperial affairs will be wisely conducted. But they will certainly stand a better chance of it than they do at present, for they will be in the hands of men whose principal business in life will be to attend to them, and who will have been chosen for that work because of their real or supposed capacity for dealing with it. And at the same time there will be a better chance of public opinion, in every part of the Empire, with regard to matters of Imperial interest, finding true expression. For it will then be possible, as it is not possible at present, for A and B, who may belong to different parties, and yet may be in complete agreement about questions of Imperial Defence or Trade, to oppose one another on the subjects on which they differ, and yet to co-operate with regard to the matters on which they are agreed. At the present time, if the Government or the party with which a man may be in general sympathy on questions of Home Politics, is at the same time pursuing a course in Imperial affairs, which appears to him unwise and even disastrous, what is he to do? In order to be represented in the one direction, he must submit to being entirely misrepresented in the other: or else he must acquiesce in being reduced to complete impotence. It is only by a separation of the two spheres that a way can be found out of this dilemma.

No doubt a great constitutional change of this kind is not easily effected. In any case it can only come about by successive stages. And it will never come about at all, unless a powerful and long-sustained movement of public opinion in all parts of the Empire gives the necessary impetus, and compels politicians to bestir themselves in a matter at once so difficult, and so alien to their ordinary

preoccupations. But then such a movement is now, as it seems to me, well on its way, and is steadily gaining in momentum. I can hardly be mistaken in this, for I have watched the currents of opinion on this subject for nearly forty years, and that with critical eyes and in no very sanguine temper. My own conviction indeed has never wavered, but I have had many doubts whether it was destined to be widely shared. Latterly, however, despite occasional set-backs, the believers in Imperial Unity cannot but have felt that their bark was floating upon a steadily rising tide. Progress in such a movement is never continuous, and is peculiarly difficult to gauge. But when I look back upon the course of affairs since my College days, I cannot but realise the immense increase of interest everywhere in the problems of Empire, and the yet greater and more significant change in the popular attitude with regard to them. That change of mind has been much more marked in the last fifteen years than in the preceding five and twenty, more marked in the last five than in the preceding ten. And it is due to no accidental or temporary influences. It is the inevitable outcome of closer intercourse between different parts of the Empire, leading to a better appreciation of their importance to one another, and of all that the Empire stands for in the world. And every year this intercourse increases, and its lessons sink more deeply into the minds of men. The decisive factor in the case is the question of time. It is inconceivable that the British race, which, with all its faults, has never been lacking in fundamental sanity, should throw away the advantages of its unique position in the world, of its hold on five continents, of its possession of economic resources more vast and varied than any that have ever before fallen under a single control, when once it has fully realised what that position means. But its meaning is not easily brought home to a number of separate democracies, living at a distance from one another, confronted with very different local problems, and each naturally absorbed in its own local affairs. And until it has been brought home to them, until

their mental horizon has been widened by the growth of intercourse, and the education of contact with the outside world, which till recently was the exclusive privilege of a very limited class, there is great danger of their drifting apart, to say nothing of the danger of their being severed by the intrigues, or the direct hostile impact, of jealous rivals. The history of South Africa is a case in point. With a shrug of the shoulders, not realising what it meant, we allowed an alien flag to be hoisted within the British ring-fence, thereby inviting the intrusion of foreign influences, and we were soon within an ace of the permanent separation of all South Africa from the rest of the Empire. It needed a long and critical struggle, and enormous sacrifices, to preserve even the possibility of that country becoming some day a free member of a British Imperial Union.

Time fights on the side of Imperialism, but the question has always been whether enough time would be accorded to us. The duty of Imperialists in my day has been to hold the fort during the long indispensable process of education—to try and prevent our Imperial heritage from being dissipated before its meaning and value could be generally understood. It has not been in their power materially to hasten that process, or to forge new political bonds of Empire, the necessity of which was not apparent to the majority of their contemporaries. All that they have been able to do is to preserve the materials of future union from being wasted or impaired. The erection of the edifice itself has been reserved for another and a more fortunate generation.

Yet there is no reason why these forerunners should feel dispirited. They have been privileged to watch the immense progress of the idea to which they have given years of service, though they may not live to see its final triumph. They are pioneers, and, like all pioneers, they have sometimes taken wrong turns and followed tracks which have not really led them any nearer to their goal. Those who come after them will profit not only by their discoveries, but by their mistakes. But, when all is said and done, the goal is nearer than it was.

It is true, that a real constitution of the Empire no more exists to-day than it has done at any time since the old bonds of Colonial dependence were abandoned, and nothing put in their place. But it is equally true, that a great, and latterly a rapid, expansion of political conceptions, both in the Mother Country and in the Colonies, has made the gradual establishment of a new and better Imperial constitution possible. Without such a growth of ideas it would have been unprofitable even to discuss it.

To that growth of ideas I am encouraged to think that some at least of the addresses contained in this book have in a certain measure contributed. It is in the hope that they may continue to do so that I venture to republish them. Their utility may not be altogether lessened by the fact that they contain no deliberate or formal propaganda, and that they bear so unmistakably the stamp of their time, a time of transition, of preparation, of groping towards a still but dimly visible end. They may not even be useless as bearing witness, conscious or unconscious, to that malignant influence of party warfare upon the treatment of Imperial questions, about which I have said so much. A considerable number of the later speeches, though not all of them, were delivered from party platforms, and are no doubt of the same type as a good many others delivered under similar conditions, which my friend the editor, in order as far as possible to avoid repetition, has wisely omitted. They ought not to be, in respect of sincerity, unfavourable specimens of party oratory, for in making them I had certain advantages which party speakers do not often enjoy. Always avowedly a free-lance, and unhampered by the obligation to adhere strictly to the lines of any 'authorised programme,' I could afford to devote myself to those subjects on which I really felt strongly. And, as it happened, there was, and is, so much in the policy of the present holders of power, with which I heartily disagree, that I never had to strain my conscience to find material for criticism. Yet, for all that, I feel now, as I read over these speeches, that the admixture of party

polemics—not unfair, as party polemics go, or of a very virulent type—nevertheless detracts from my advocacy of the causes which I always had most at heart. The truth is, as it seems to me, that there is no object of supreme national importance at the present time, which can be attained by the method of party conflict. Imperial Union certainly cannot be, but no more can a sound system of National Defence, or the solution of the Irish Problem, or the repair of the mutilated constitution of the United Kingdom. The greatest political disaster of recent times was the break-down of the Conference of 1910. And if this is the case in the purely political field, it is surely no less true of the economic and social problems, of which all thoughtful men recognise the urgency. In none of these directions is there much to hope from the competition of rival bands of politicians in devising superficially attractive panaceas.

This may be an entirely mistaken view, but it is one which has grown upon me in the course of a well-meant effort not to appear too singular, but to work for the causes, which I believe in, without departing altogether from the conventional lines of party controversy. It is not pleasant to have, after all, to confess oneself an eccentric, still less to run the risk of being derided as a 'superior person.' So far from being justly regarded in that light, I am very conscious of my inferiority—certainly in effectiveness—to the ardent and whole-hearted party man. But then his chief strength lies in his conviction that the victory of his party means the salvation of the State. If all the objects one most cares about are hopeless unless they become national, if they seem utterly unattainable by the means of a mere party victory, it is difficult to throw oneself into the party fight with the necessary enthusiasm. Of course there is always the danger that, if you don't preach from a party platform, you won't get anybody to listen to you at all. But one has to take some risks in this world. And on the whole I am inclined to think that there is a sufficiently widespread and increasing weariness of the

partisan treatment of every great national question to give the exponents of a different method a chance. The attempt to think out for himself, and to commend to others, a national policy as free as possible from party shibboleths, may disqualify a man as a candidate for office, and so deprive him of the most obvious opportunity of serving his country, but it need not exclude him from all influence in public life. Indeed I believe that the number of men profoundly interested in public affairs, and anxious to discharge their full duty as citizens, who are in revolt against the rigidity and insincerity of our present party system, is very considerable, and steadily increasing, and that they only need to stand together to make themselves felt. They may never attempt to form a new party of their own, indeed it is not a new party that is wanted. It is the encouragement of national as opposed to party spirit. What they could do with a little organisation would be to play the umpire between parties, and to make the unscrupulous pursuit of mere party advantage an unprofitable game. Nothing would be more calculated to impose moderation on the warring factions in bidding against one another for popular support than the existence of a powerful body of opinion—powerful enough to turn many votes—which was certain to be alienated by tactics that were too unblushingly partisan. The growing influence of such a Jury might lead to the gradual removal first of one great national interest, and then of another, from the arena of party conflict, until what was left to fight over on the old lines would be only questions of no deep and permanent importance. What has actually happened with regard to the conduct of Foreign Policy in the last ten years is of hopeful augury. But there is room for much further progress in the same direction.

And if ever there was a question, which called aloud for consideration in none but a national spirit, it is the Imperial question. Indeed Imperialism, properly conceived, is just such a draught of oxygen as is needed to revitalise the used-up atmosphere of British politics. We are here in

the presence of an influence which cannot but deeply affect the whole future of mankind. It is true that, owing perhaps to some of the associations of the word 'Imperial,' no great movement of the human spirit has ever been more completely misunderstood. But the misconception of it is being gradually overcome. Imperialism as a political doctrine has often been represented as something tawdry and superficial. In reality it has all the depth and comprehensiveness of a religious faith. Its significance is moral even more than material. It is a mistake to think of it as principally concerned with extension of territory, with 'painting the map red.' There is quite enough painted red already. It is not a question of a couple of hundred thousand square miles more or less. It is a question of preserving the unity of a great race, of enabling it, by maintaining that unity, to develop freely on its own lines, and to continue to fulfil its distinctive mission in the world. As it happens, that race—owing to causes which are plain on the face of history and which need not be recited here—is scattered over a large extent of the earth's surface. But this is accidental, not essential. Room for expansion is indeed essential, but there might be room for immense expansion within a smaller but more compact territory. It is true that this wide dispersion of the British race has certain great advantages—it has given us a unique range of experience, and the control of an unrivalled wealth and variety of material resources. But this dispersion is at the same time a source of weakness, and a source of danger, for it is owing to it, and to it almost alone, that the problem of maintaining political unity is so difficult. Indeed it is only 'the shrinkage of the world,' due to the triumphs of mechanical science, which has rendered the solution of that problem possible at all. But now that a solution is possible, the failure to find it would be incredible folly, and a huge disaster. That communities of the same origin, the same language, the same political and social structure, the same type of civilisation, with all that they have to cherish, to develop, and to

defend in common, should fail to stand together, and should, owing to that failure, run the risk of falling severally under alien domination, would be as unnatural as suicide.

And like suicide, it would mean dereliction of duty. For the British race has become responsible for the peace and order and the just and humane government of three or four hundred millions of people, who, differing as widely as possible from one another in other respects, are all alike in this, that, from whatever causes, they do not possess the gift of maintaining peace and order for themselves. Without our control their political condition would be one of chaos, as it was for centuries before that control was established. The *Pax Britannica* is essential to the maintenance of civilised conditions of existence among one-fifth of the human race.

But this unique position, which is of inestimable value not only to the world but to ourselves, less perhaps for the material benefits which it brings us, than for its effect upon the national character—for it has helped to develop some of the best and most distinctive qualities of the race—is a position not easy to maintain. Interest and honour alike impel us to maintain it, but the strain is great. Our share of 'the white man's burden' is an exceptional share. No doubt it is good for us to bear it, if we can. And we can bear it, but—in the long run—only if we bring to the task the undivided strength of the British race throughout the world, with all its immense possibilities of growth. Sooner or later the burden must become too heavy for the unaided strength of that portion of the race which, at any given time, dwells in the United Kingdom.

For the future growth of that portion is sternly restricted by physical conditions, and it has parted, and must continue to part, with much of its best blood and sinew to build up other lands. The population of these islands cannot greatly increase in numbers without declining in quality, and the quality of a large proportion of it—more of that directly—is already far below the standard which we ought to maintain. A better distribution of the people between town

and country, and greater attention to physical training, would allow of the healthy development of our present numbers, perhaps of slightly larger numbers. But, with even the best of management, there is not much more elbow-room. Yet artificial restrictions on increase are undesirable. They are the beginning of decay. Moreover there is not the slightest reason in our case to limit increase —provided the stock be sound—as long as there are vast undeveloped areas under our own flag simply clamouring for more and ever more inhabitants. We can and we ought to supply that need, and as a matter of fact there is a constant outflow of many of the most vigorous and enterprising of our people to these new Britains beyond the seas. This stream of emigration is not an evil in itself. It is a good thing in itself. It would only become an evil if this precious human material, together with all that has gone before to the same regions, were to be lost to us and to the Empire. To prevent such a calamity, to keep the scattered communities of British stock, while severally independent within their own confines, one body-politic among the sovereign nations of the world, maintaining their common history and traditions, and continuing to discharge their common duty to humanity—that is the noble, the difficult, but by no means impossible task which Imperialism seeks to achieve.

It may be said that in any case the self-governing Dominions can give no help to the Mother Country in the defence or the development of her vast Asian and Central African possessions. But that is a very short-sighted view. Directly, indeed, the Dominions may contribute little to-day to the maintenance of the Dependent Empire, nor would it be reasonable, in the present stage of their development, to expect that they should. But indirectly they already contribute to it—and are zealous to do so in an increasing degree—by strengthening the Mother Country herself, and by helping her to uphold that maritime power which is the chief bulwark of the whole Imperial fabric. And then we are only at the beginning, in the very earliest stages, of

awakened interest, among the peoples of the Dominions, in the problems of the Empire as a whole. Hitherto they have been almost entirely absorbed, and very naturally, in their own local affairs. But that interest is bound to grow; indeed it is already growing very fast, as their relations with the outside world become more numerous and important. And with that larger outlook they are also beginning to take a pride in their membership of a world-wide Empire, while their increasing self-reliance and self-respect make them chafe at the idea of continuing to play a merely passive and subordinate rôle. This new leaven is bound to work great changes in their relations to the Mother Country and to one another, and to lead, if the Empire holds together, to their increased participation alike in its burdens and in its control.

Throughout the foregoing statement I have emphasised the importance of the racial bond. From my point of view this is fundamental. It is the British race which built the Empire, and it is the undivided British race which can alone uphold it. Not that I underestimate the importance of community of material interests in binding the different parts of the Empire together. The following pages will show that I have emphasised it over and over again. But deeper, stronger, more primordial than these material ties is the bond of common blood, a common language, common history and traditions. But what do I mean by the British race? I mean all the peoples of the United Kingdom and their descendants in other countries under the British flag. The expression may not be ethnologically accurate. The inhabitants of England, Scotland and Ireland are of various stocks, and in spite of constant intermixture, strongly-marked differences of type persist, even when they are not, as in the case of the Irish, emphasised and nourished by political dissidence. And yet to speak of them collectively as the British race is not only convenient, but is in accordance with broad political facts. Community of language and institutions, and centuries of life together under one sovereignty,

have not indeed obliterated differences, but have superadded bonds, which are more than artificial, which make them in the eyes of the world, if not always in their own, a single nation, and which it will be found impossible to destroy. And among the influences which have made and make for such national unity, the Empire itself holds a foremost place. It is their common work. The conquerors and rulers of the Dependent Empire, the settlers who have peopled the self-governing Dominions, have been drawn indifferently from every part of the United Kingdom. Face to face with alien peoples, or with the unpeopled wilderness, they have realised their essential unity. The jealousies, even the feuds, which divided them in the country of their origin, have fallen into the background. The common language and the common flag have prevailed. It is true that in all the more populous and more settled portions of the Dominions, where the struggle against hostile races or physical obstacles is over, the old distinctions are still to some extent maintained and even cherished, but, with rare exceptions, they have now a purely social significance, and have lost all traces of bitterness and enmity. In any serious emergency the men of the several British stocks stand firmly together. I can testify to this from my own experience. During the South African War, Nationalist members in the House of Commons may have cheered disasters to the British arms, and a few stray Irishmen from the Old Country may even have thrown in their lot with the Boers. But the South Africans of Irish descent were as keen supporters of the British cause as the mass of their Scotch or English fellow-citizens. Indeed, some of the most ardent of them all were the sons of men who had been malcontents, and even rebels, in the land of their origin. It is true that the Irish of the Dominions—excepting, of course, the Orangemen—remain, for the most part, 'Home Rulers.' But that does not involve, in the great majority of cases, any feeling of hostility to the Empire. The contrast, in this respect, between them and the Irishmen who have passed under foreign flags—

the American Irish for instance—is marked, and is very significant.

From the Imperial point of view it matters comparatively little, of which of the British stocks the population of the Dominions is composed. English, Scotch, Welsh and Irish, they tend, without losing their distinctive characteristics, to develop, in essentials, a common sentiment. The idea of keeping in effective touch with men of their own race in the Old Country, or in other lands under the British flag, and of presenting a united front to the world, appeals powerfully to them all. What does greatly matter, on the other hand, is the relative strength of all the British stocks collectively as compared with that of the people of other European races living side by side with them. It is true that in Canada the latter are almost equal in number to their fellow-citizens of British origin, while in South Africa they are more than equal, and that nevertheless Canada exhibits a strong and growing attachment to the Empire, while even in South Africa anything like active disaffection to it is dormant, if not dead. South Africa indeed presents to-day the surprising spectacle of a British Dominion in which a non-British race, quite recently at war with the British Empire, is, by virtue of its superior numbers, in exclusive possession of all political power, and there is yet no attempt to disturb the Imperial connection. The present dispute between two sections of the Boers is virtually a quarrel over the extent to which they should use their power, locally, for purely racial ends. Neither party aims, at any rate for the present, at detaching South Africa from the Empire. That such acquiescence should be possible, even for a time, affords, no doubt, striking evidence of the effect of free British institutions in allaying racial hostility as well as of the attractive force of the Empire. But, for all that, the position is far from being an ideal one. South Africa is, and will long remain, the weakest link in the Imperial chain, and she will be the last of the Dominions to enter an Imperial Union. I do not mean to say that, if the Mother Country and the other Dominions were to form such a Union, South

Africa might not be drawn into it. Indeed I believe she ultimately would be, for, given the preservation of local autonomy—which is a *sine qua non* of Union in all the Dominions—even the Dutch would not be insensible to the material and other advantages of a world-wide citizenship. But in the present conflict of centripetal with centrifugal forces South Africa must be reckoned among the latter. And she must be so reckoned, precisely because the British element in her population is comparatively so weak, and because we have thrown away the opportunity of strengthening it.

In saying this, do not let me be thought to advocate the 'anglicisation' of the non-British races of the Empire, or to wish to force them into a British mould. Imperialism is something wider than 'Anglo-Saxondom' or even than 'Pan-Britannicism.' The power of incorporating alien races, without trying to disintegrate them, or to rob them of their individuality, is characteristic of the British Imperial system. It is not by what it takes away, but by what it gives, not by depriving them of their own character, language, and traditions, but by ensuring them the retention of all these, and at the same time opening new vistas of culture and advancement, that it seeks to win them to itself. The French Canadian need not cease to be a French Canadian, but he may be a British soldier or administrator all the same, and he will have absolutely the same scope and opportunities as his competitors of British blood. And the whole Empire is equally open to the enterprise and ambition of the Dutch South African. This principle of boundless tolerance has, like everything human, 'the defects of its qualities.' It may become a source of weakness by being carried too far. And it has been carried too far, in my opinion, not when we have granted the freest permissive use of their own languages to the incorporated races, but when we have allowed any of those languages to be put on a footing of absolute equality with English in official use, and its teaching and employment to be made compulsory, where there were no reasons of necessity or convenience to justify such a course. But whatever the shortcomings of the

system, its merits far outweigh them. This broad inclusiveness is one of the great secrets of the success of British rule. It is part of our moral capital as a nation, and gives us a title higher than mere force to the position which we occupy in the world.

But the great point is, that this temper is distinctively British. It is peculiar to the British Empire among Empires, and to the British nation as an Empire-building race. Whether this is due to some original quality in the race itself—to its own composite character—or merely to the teachings of experience, I need not here attempt to determine. I am not concerned with the causes of the fact, but with the fact itself and its consequences. It is not thus that Prussia has dealt with her Polish subjects, or Russia with the Poles and Finns. It was not thus that the early Dutch settlers in South Africa treated the Huguenots who took refuge among them. They stamped out the language and nationality of these fellow-Protestants and forced them all into their own mould. No doubt we could not, if we would, deal with the Dutch in like fashion. But it is equally true that we would not if we could. We have never attempted it. Respect for their language and individuality, equality of citizenship between the white races, have been our principles from the first. Not only has this attitude become, in South Africa as elsewhere, a fundamental tenet of British Imperialism, but it is rooted in the character of the British race. And if it is true, as it certainly is, that the spirit of liberality and tolerance, of respect not only for personal freedom but for racial individuality, is essential to the preservation of the Empire, it is equally true that that spirit finds its firmest supporters in the British element of the population. When the British flag was hauled down in the Transvaal in 1881, the principle of equal citizenship disappeared with it, and the spirit of uni-racial dominance and exclusiveness took its place. Fair play between the two white races was much more strenuously upheld by the government of Sir Starr Jameson than it has been by the governments which have succeeded it, even by that of a

man who is personally so broad-minded as General Botha. It is not only because of their naturally keener attachment to the British flag, but because of their greater congenital sympathy with the vital Imperial principles of even-handed justice and ample tolerance, that a preponderance of people of British stock is so greatly to be desired in all the self-governing Dominions.

To direct a steady outflow of men of British stock to the younger countries of the Empire must thus be a constant object of Imperial policy. But the serious pursuit of that object leads us very far. It is not merely a question of better control, of more careful arrangements for emigration. Of greater importance still is the quality of the emigrants. And that depends upon the character of the nation from which they are drawn. Thus the consistent Imperialist is inevitably led to concern himself with those influences which affect the condition of the mass of our people here at home. He cannot help being a zealot for social improvement. But he will have a touchstone of his own, by which to discriminate between the numerous and competing schemes for promoting it, of which our restless age is so prolific. He will be inclined to judge them by their probable effect upon our national strength and Imperial position. But is there, after all, any better or more trustworthy criterion? Judged by that test, there are no doubt many popular nostrums which would not pass muster. But there is no vital movement, making for the greater essential soundness, physical and moral, of the mass of the people, which is not embraced by the ideal of national and Imperial greatness, rationally conceived.

I might defend this proposition by many illustrations, but I fear to weary the reader, who has had the patience to follow me thus far. And I never set out with the ambitious desire to write a sociological treatise, but am simply trying to explain a particular point of view. I will therefore confine myself to one or two instances to make my meaning clear.

Among the social movements of our time, which bear the stamp of wholesomeness, a high place must certainly be assigned to the effort to restore the lost balance between

town and country, so that rural occupations and interests, and the rural spirit, may once more count for something in our national life. It is true that within the narrow confines of these islands the balance can never be entirely restored, though it may be in the Empire as a whole. But even in these islands something substantial can still be done. This movement, in order to succeed, must have an economic basis, such as a reasonable measure of Protection would no doubt afford. But Protection being, at any rate for the present, out of the question, it may nevertheless find such a basis in improved methods of cultivation, and in better business management on the part of agriculturists, as the experience of some foreign countries, notably Denmark, and the success of Plunkett and his school in Ireland have clearly proved. But while the movement must have an economic basis, its purpose and effect are more than economic. They are social and ethical. To increase the number of people living on the land and by the land, and to give to that increased number a healthier, brighter, and more interesting life, and a greater influence upon the character of the whole nation, which needs this steadying counterweight to the more restless and excitable spirit of the towns—that is the real gist of the rural movement. And its bearing on Imperial development is clear. Countrymen are the best settlers. They have formed the core of the Army and Navy as well as of the administrative services of the Empire. The tenacity and stubborn endurance which carried Great Britain through the severest trials of the past, and made amends for many blunders, belong to a time when the country element was still predominant. No over-urbanised people would have lasted out the struggle with Philip, or the struggle with Napoleon. Causes which, like the cause of Imperialism, have a far outlook, and require of their votaries a firm grasp of fundamental principle and long persistence, would be the greatest gainers, if the temper of the countryside became once more a strong ingredient in the character of the nation.

But no doubt, whatever may be the success of the rural movement, the great majority of the people of these islands,

and especially of Great Britain, will continue to be urban, and engaged in commercial and industrial pursuits. And thus the sympathy of those, who keep ever before their eyes the ideal of a vigorous national life, must needs be enlisted on the side of every honest effort to counteract the evil effects of aggregation in large cities upon the stamina and *morale* of the population. But they will only be able to feel real enthusiasm for remedies which are, in the best sense of the word, radical—which strike at the root of the evil, and do not merely seek to mitigate its consequences.

Among remedies of this character the long and honourable chapter of our industrial legislation—from the first Factory Act to the Trade Boards Act of 1909—deserves a foremost place. This great body of law, still constantly growing, has done much to check physical deterioration, and has set an example which is being eagerly followed by the most progressive foreign nations. And there are two more recent movements prompted by the same spirit, which, if they strike root, will do much for the health and character of the people, namely the creation of Garden Cities and the organisation of the Boy Scouts. The latter indeed is peculiarly happy in its inspiration because it begins at the right end. It is in youth and adolescence that the greatest mischief is done, and such mischief is irreparable.

Indeed, if there is one thing more needful than another, it is a bold and comprehensive treatment of the training of youth. How sorely we still lack a large conception of what is required to build up a sturdy and self-reliant, not to say an Imperial race! Millions are indeed spent on education, and educational ideals are improving. But we remain far too timid in providing all that is necessary to make our system successful, and in carrying the work, which has been begun at such great cost, to its logical conclusion. And thus much of that immense expenditure is wasted. It is waste to provide elaborate instruction for children who have not the strength to assimilate it, whether their inability be due to underfeeding or to other physical defects, equally the result of neglect. In compelling every child to come to school, the State undertook, and rightly undertook, a

great responsibility. That responsibility is not discharged by the provision of a certain amount of more or less suitable instruction. Care for the health and physical development of the child, as perfect as money and science can make it, is equally imperative, if that instruction is not to be largely thrown away. And there is waste again, and fearful waste, in letting the education of boys and girls stop dead short, just when it is beginning to be formative, and allowing them to drift away, at much too early an age, into money-making employments, which have often no future, and to unlearn, before they are grown up, whatever knowledge and discipline they had begun to acquire. The time will surely come when this vast output of half-trained young people, with no definite skill in anything, will be recognised as a huge social and economic blunder, and when the State will keep a hold upon the lad until he is fit to earn, not a precarious pittance, but a decent and continuous livelihood as a craftsman, and upon the girl, until she is capable of discharging the duties of a wife and mother. That, no doubt, is a reform of so fundamental a character, and involving changes of such magnitude in our social and industrial system, that it will take time to accomplish. But if it was once recognised as the goal of national education, the difficulties could be got over one by one. It is indefiniteness of aim which is at the root of our troubles. At present it is really very difficult to say what we are driving at with all this immense expenditure of money and energy, or why, having gone as far as we do go, we suddenly stop. Up to a point everything is carefully regulated, then, at the most critical moment, all the rest is left to chance. Our object evidently cannot be the making of children into men and women fit to make their way in the world. And yet is it possible to conceive of education as anything less ?

It may be said that to complete the training of the youth of the nation would be far too costly. But the answer is twofold. In the first place, we should thus get far better value for the immense expenditure to which we are already committed ; and in the next place, whatever the cost, it would be trifling compared to the burden which we now

carry in the shape of a great multitude of people, living perpetually in destitution or on the verge of it. It is true that there will always be some destitution, because there will always be a certain number of people who are hopelessly vicious or incompetent. But these causes do not account for a tithe of the men and women who at present can hardly keep body and soul together. They are not vicious or incapable of doing useful work. They are just unskilled. They have never been taught any definite trade, or given sufficient general training to pick one up for themselves, and they have, as a rule, begun to do inferior and unimproving work too early. The existence of so vast a body of people in this condition is a disgrace to a country with such great resources and opportunities as our own. And there is no necessity for it in the nature of things. The evil can be remedied, but it can only be remedied in one way, and that is by the better training of the young, by not turning them loose upon the world before they are fit for anything in particular. No system which man can devise—not Socialism or Collectivism, or any other—can permanently ensure a decent living wage to people who are not economically worth it. But there is no good reason why people of low economic value should be so numerous. There is plenty of work to be done in the world which can support in comfort the men who are capable of doing it—enough even in this crowded country, certainly more than enough in the outside Empire. It is the capacity that is lacking, not the opportunities.

The idea that the State should extend its care for the young beyond the age of childhood must not be confounded with a demand for the general extension of the school age. A perfectly organised system of National Education would no doubt involve a great increase in the number of Continuation Schools, and much more complete arrangements for Technical Instruction. But education is not confined to schools, and there are many trades which can only be learned properly if the learners begin young. What public policy demands is not so much that young people should be kept at school, as that they should not be engaged

in work which is not, in the broad sense of the word, educational, which is not fitting them for better work when they are grown up. And there is one other principle equally fundamental, namely that their work should not be of such a nature as to stunt their growth, and that they should have time and opportunity for physical development. The continuous physical training of the youth of the nation till they reach the age of maturity may be thought a counsel of perfection. But so was general elementary education fifty years ago. Fifty years hence the former may seem no less a matter of course than the latter seems to-day. Why should not every locality have its Boys' Brigade, and all lads between fourteen and eighteen be required to join it? Exercise and discipline at that age are no less important, perhaps even more important, than they are in childhood. But if these blessings are to become general, the pioneer work of voluntary agencies will, as in the case of elementary education, have to be co-ordinated and supplemented by public action.

It is possible that we may be led to this conclusion by another road. There is a great and growing anxiety among thoughtful men of all classes and parties about our national security, and it no longer seems as improbable as it once did that, in view of the enormous growth of the Armies and Navies of other Powers, we may be driven to adopt some form of universal military training in our own country. I have said so much on this subject in several of the addresses contained in this book that I will not discuss the general question here. My own conviction has been and is, that while the United Kingdom does not need an Army of the same size or character as those of the great Continental nations, it does need such an increase of its military strength as our present system can never give us. That necessary increase of strength can, I believe, only be obtained by calling on the whole able-bodied youth of the nation to undergo, on the threshold of manhood, a period of regular military training. But in order that that period of training may be effective, and yet not excessively long, the young men who enter upon it should be physically fit, and men-

tally alert, and accustomed to discipline. But these are just the qualities which we must desire them to have in any case, and which anything like a perfect system of National Education would aim at giving them. Thus the exigencies of National Defence may lead us to a readier acceptance of the ideals of educational and social reformers. This is one more illustration of the close connection which really exists between two objects, which are frequently represented as alien and even antagonistic to one another—I mean National Strength and Social Progress. Interest in the latter is not confined to men whose sympathies are cosmopolitan rather than patriotic. On the contrary, there is no stronger stimulus to exertion for the removal of the social evils, which sap the vitality of a people and dig deep trenches of cleavage between classes, than genuine pride of country. To those, in whom that sentiment is really powerful, the existence of slums, of sweating, of health-destroying industries, and of all other conditions which lead to the degradation of great numbers of their fellow-countrymen, must appear an intolerable desecration of all that they hold most dear.

I have travelled a long way in following the idea of Imperialism into some of its less obvious consequences, and have been led to touch, however fugitively, on many subjects which seem at first sight to have little relation to it. And this may be thought to be inconsistent with what I said at the outset about the necessity of discrimination, of keeping foreign and Imperial relations separate from subjects of a different character, with which they are now so constantly mixed up. But there is no real inconsistency between the two points of view. The field of public action, in that vast conglomerate of different communities which constitute the British Empire, is enormously wide. It can only be covered by a complete network of graduated authorities—municipal, provincial, national, and Imperial—to all of which, within their several spheres, it is desirable to leave the maximum of independence and free initiative. It is a complex problem to adjust their relations to one another and to keep each of them confined to its legitimate work.

But while delimitation of functions is necessary, there is no reason why it should militate against unity of spirit and of aim. On the contrary, every form of public activity is likely to be benefited, and every worker to gain a new inspiration from realising the bearing of his individual efforts upon the welfare of the Empire as a whole. Definition of spheres as between one public authority and another, division of labour between public men—these are salutary, and indeed essential. But all this necessary division and specialisation—and it is constantly on the increase—must not make us forget that the body of any state, like the human body, is indivisible, however we may distinguish its different members and their several functions for purposes of study or of treatment. There is a constant interaction between the several parts. And then again the individual citizen remains the same human being, to however many different political organisms—borough, county, province, country, or what not—he may belong. It is reasonable to expect that he should be animated by some unity of purpose in all his several capacities. He may be well advised to confine his main activity to a single sphere, and even to a single subject. But it is neither possible nor desirable that his interests and his sympathies should be equally restricted. He will inevitably, if he has any care for public affairs at all, be drawn into many controversies, and forced to make up his mind on many questions, outside the subject which is specially his own. And that, if he wishes to be true to himself, is not always an easy matter. No doubt there are many people, not lacking in vigour or public spirit, who do not experience this difficulty. They seem capable of keeping their opinions in water-tight compartments, and of holding strong views on a number of more or less related questions, without attempting to harmonise them. They throw themselves now into one movement which appeals to them, and now into another, yet never stop to inquire whether their various activities are converging to any common goal. But there are others, and I confess to being one of the number, to whom such a position would be one of intolerable mental discomfort. Especially in a time

like the present, a time of ferment, of deep social unrest, of innumerable and competing agitations for radical changes in our political system, they feel an imperative need of some clue through the maze, some guiding principle, which may save them from straying into blind alleys and frittering away energy upon a number of superficial 'reforms,' and which may help them to concentrate upon a few great and simple objects of public endeavour. And if, as is likely, they fail to find such a principle in the programme of any political party, they have to try and evolve it for themselves. It is in some such effort as this that I myself have been led to find a resting-place in the doctrine of Imperialism, which I have tried here very briefly, and no doubt very inadequately, to set forth. To what extent my conclusions may be of help to other people, it is impossible for me to know. Different men are animated by different ideals. All that can be expected of any of us is to remain true to his own. And for my own part I can imagine no higher ideal which can animate the citizens of my country at the present time than that of a great and continuous national life, shared by us with our kinsmen, who have built up new communities in distant parts of the earth, enabling them and us together to uphold our traditional principles of freedom, order and justice, and to discharge with ever-increasing efficiency our duty as guardians of the more backward races who have come under our sway. That ideal seems to me to embrace all the worthiest aims, whether of narrower or wider scope, which British statesmanship can pursue, and to give to all, who are engaged in any branch of public life, a central meeting-ground and a common inspiration.

MILNER.

*March* 1913.

# SPEECHES AND ADDRESSES

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## LONDON.—March 29, 1897

[The following speech was delivered in London before Lord—then Sir Alfred—Milner's departure for Cape Town, to take up the post of Governor of the Cape, and High Commissioner for South Africa. His appointment, little more than a year after the Jameson Raid, at a time when the affairs of South Africa were attracting much attention and causing no little anxiety, had excited an exceptional amount of public interest. The dinner at which this speech was made was given to him as a 'send off,' and was attended by a great number of the leading men of both political parties, including Mr. Goschen, Mr. Chamberlain, and Mr. John Morley, as well as by many distinguished representatives of the Civil Service, the Universities, and the professional and literary world. Lord Rosebery and Sir William Harcourt, though unable to be present, both wrote very strongly-worded letters of sympathy. Mr. Asquith, then in Opposition, but an old college friend of Lord Milner's, was in the chair, and proposed the health of the guest of the evening in a very felicitous speech, in which eloquent eulogy was relieved by some good-tempered badinage, and which was admirably suited for an occasion, when people of the most opposite opinions were uniting in an expression of personal sympathy, confidence, and good-will, towards a public servant going to what everybody realised to be an important and difficult post.]

The admirable and artistic manner in which the toast of my health has been proposed by Mr. Asquith renders it more than ever difficult for me to make adequate acknowledgment. I remember, Mr. Asquith, that an old friend of yours and mine, one whose memory I believe is held in reverence by many of those present here this evening—I mean Professor Jowett—once remarked in his terse way, 'Modesty is only a virtue in a young man.' I believe in my case it is a fear lest modesty might survive into advanced age,

which has led my friends to do what they could to render such a calamity impossible. But fortunately for myself, there is one subject on which even my greatest eulogists have made express reservations. I have read a great many astonishing things about myself lately, but I have not read anywhere that I was a good speaker, and, therefore, whatever may be the difficulties of the future, I have no embarrassing reputation to live up to to-night. And that, if I may say so, is fortunate, because the feelings which are excited in me by this gathering, though they are very strong, are also very simple, and can best be expressed in simple language. I suppose no man going to a difficult post in his country's service has ever had a send-off for which he has had more cause to be grateful or more cause to be proud. But I am not so foolish as to suppose that the significance of this gathering is entirely personal. I am glad to feel that there is a personal element in it. With my old friend of college days in the chair, and a whole *posse* of his and my contemporaries in all parts of the room, with my kind friend Mr. Goschen so near me (to whom, as Mr. Asquith has truly said, I owe my introduction to the public service), and with so many others present who have given me unmistakable proofs of affection and goodwill, I cannot but feel that a kindly interest in myself personally has had a great deal to say in bringing you all together. But if I am not mistaken there is another influence which has also had much to do with it, and that is the desire, the generous desire, to give every possible support and encouragement to the man, whoever he may be, who is called upon to do what in him lies to maintain the honour and the influence of Great Britain in a country in which Englishmen are so much interested as they are at present in South Africa. I can assure you that no greater encouragement could have been given to a man in my position than that which you have given me to-night. When I think of this assembly, representing as it does both political parties, containing men of the highest public eminence on both sides in politics, then I feel that, however humble

may be the view I take of myself, at any rate my credentials are extraordinary. And, not so much on my own account as on account of the great public interests which are involved, I am sincerely grateful for that fact.

I hope, however, that on this occasion I may be excused from any reference to the future. Whatever may be the qualities required of the Queen's representative in South Africa—and I have seen a very formidable list of them—there are two at least which I believe every one will regard to be essential—I mean tact and judgment. I should conclusively prove my complete lack of those qualities, if on this occasion I were to express any half-formed and ill-considered opinions on matters of the greatest importance. But, perhaps, if it does not appear too egotistical, you will allow me to make a personal profession of faith, which in a friendly gathering of this character may not be out of place. A great number of people have said to me within the last few weeks something of this kind: 'We do not know whether we ought to congratulate you; you are going to face a very ugly business,' or words to that effect. Well, to all these cheering remarks I should like to make one answer: 'Do not congratulate me, certainly. Let congratulations wait, even if they have to wait for ever, until I have done something to deserve them. But still less condole with me: for no man is to be pitied, whatever happens, who in the best years of his life is not only permitted, but is actually called upon to engage in work into which he can throw himself with his whole heart and with a single mind.' A public servant must go where he is wanted. He is singularly fortunate if he is wanted for that kind of business to which he is most willing that all his energies should be devoted. That is my case to-day. One class of public questions interests one man, and another class another. I do not attempt to estimate their relative importance. All I know is, that for myself personally, no questions have ever had at all the same attraction as those relating to the position of this country in the outside world, and especially to the future of Greater Britain. May I be

permitted on this occasion, Mr. Asquith, to recall another evening spent by us at the Oxford Union, more than twenty years ago. It is no inappropriate reminiscence in a company like this, which includes no fewer than eleven ex-presidents of the Union, and, if I may be allowed to add myself, a round dozen. On that occasion you, as now, were in the chair, and the subject of debate was the possibility of strengthening the ties which unite this country to her great Colonies, and them to one another. The subject excited less interest than most of the subjects which we debated in those days; far less, I am glad to think, than it would excite at the present moment. But there were some half-dozen of us who hammered away—I dare say we bored our audience—at these ideas: that the growth of the Colonies into self-governing communities was no reason why they should drop away from the Mother Country or from one another; that the complete political separation of the two greatest sections of the English-speaking race was a dire disaster, not only in the manner in which it came about, but for coming about at all; that there was no political object comparable in importance with that of preventing a repetition of such a disaster, the severance of another link in the great Imperial chain. The greatest local independence, we then argued, was not incompatible with closer and more effective union for common purposes. I am interested to remember that our leader on that occasion, and the man who made by far the most powerful and effective speech on our side, was not an Englishman at all, but a Canadian—a member, that is to say, of a community which has solved the problem of uniting, on the basis of absolutely equal citizenship, men of different races and languages, who have remained bound by ever-strengthening ties of loyalty and affection to the Mother Country. Well, my lords and gentlemen, the opinions which I then feebly attempted to support have only grown stronger in me with the lapse of years. I admit that on some public questions my views may have been faint and indistinct, that, as Mr. Asquith has suggested, I may have been a wobbler. I

have a fatal habit of seeing that there is a great deal to be said on both sides of a case. I admit that there are some subjects of political controversy upon which I have not been able to form an opinion at all. In that Greek state in which, if I remember rightly, a man was bound to take one side or the other upon pain of death, I should have had my head cut off before I was twenty-five, and should have died a martyr to my principles. But there is one question upon which I have never been able to see the other side, and that is precisely this question of Imperial unity. My mind is not so constructed that I am capable of understanding the arguments of those who question its desirability or its possibility. I admit that the sentiment, the desire, to strengthen the ties which unite the different portions of the Empire, though rapidly growing, may not yet be so powerful or so universal as to make any great forward step possible in our time. What we can do, and what we ought to do, is to maintain religiously the ties which exist, to seize every opportunity which naturally offers itself of developing new ones, to spare no effort to remove misunderstanding and mistrust, where they have unfortunately arisen, and to trust to time and the absolute reasonableness of our ideal, to bring about its ultimate complete triumph. Such, at least, is my personal conviction. And this being so, I feel that it is a great privilege to be allowed to fill any position in the character of what I may be, perhaps, allowed to call a civilian soldier of the Empire. To succeed in it, to render any substantial service to any part of our world-wide State, would be all that in my most audacious dreams I have ever ventured to aspire to. But in a cause in which one absolutely believes, even failure—for the cause itself is not going to fail—even personal failure would be preferable to an easy life of comfortable prosperity in any other sphere. I will only say, in conclusion, that I feel that no words of mine can possibly convey an adequate sense of my gratitude for the magnificent welcome, the magnificent farewell, which you have given me to-night. My special thanks are due to my old

friends, Mr. Brodrick,[1] Mr. Curzon,[2] and Mr. Gell, who, though all of them very busy men, have devoted so much time to the laborious and not altogether grateful task of organising this meeting, and to you, Mr. Asquith, for the kindly manner in which you have presided over it. My thanks are also due to all who have done me the honour to come here to-night. I am sure I shall be forgiven, if for this and many other kindnesses I am unable to express my thanks to each of them individually. To-night will always be most memorable in my life—perhaps the most memorable occasion which I have yet experienced. I can only express the fervent hope that I may be able to do something to justify your confidence, as I certainly can never be unmindful of your kindness and good-will.

## GRAAFF REINET.—MARCH 3, 1898

[This speech, which at the time when it was made caused a considerable stir in South Africa, was the first speech of anything like a controversial character delivered by Sir A. Milner in that country. When he first arrived at Cape Town in the spring of 1897 there was great political tension. The differences between Great Britain and the Transvaal had reached an acute phase, and there was a very bitter feeling between the Dutch and the British in Cape Colony. But the impartial and conciliatory attitude of the new Governor, who visited the most distant parts of the colony and made friends with all sections of the people, while declining to be drawn into political controversy, gradually led to a subsidence of racial and party polemics, and the latter months of 1897 were a period of comparative tranquillity.

In the beginning of 1898, however, the political horizon again became clouded. The Government of the Transvaal persisted in its old illiberal policy towards the Uitlanders, and the agitation among the latter once more gathered force. In the Cape Colony a general election was impending, and the party fight was being conducted largely on racial lines, and with much more reference to the situation in the Transvaal than to any local issues. It was under these circumstances that Sir A. Milner uttered this, his first warning, to the Bond party in the Cape Colony, not to allow their racial sympathy with the Boers of the Transvaal to carry them to the length of actively supporting the reactionary policy of Kruger, and thwarting the efforts of the British Government to obtain, by peaceful means,

[1] Now Viscount Midleton. [2] Now Earl Curzon.

these reforms in the Government of the Transvaal which everybody, including the Colonial Dutch themselves, knew to be urgent.]

I SHOULD have been glad to avoid any reference to political questions to-night, but I have been put into a position in which it is impossible for me entirely to ignore them. I cannot, without discourtesy, disregard altogether the terms of the address which was presented to me to-day by the local members of the Afrikander Bond. That address protested in somewhat vehement terms against the charges of disloyalty, which it alleged had been directed against the Bond, and it suggested that I should take steps to clear the character of that organisation. Really, gentlemen, I think the request a little unreasonable. We are just entering upon a season of electioneering. If, in addition to discharging my ordinary business (which pretty well fills up my day), I had to correct all the unfair and exaggerated statements which at election times are made by every party against every other party, I should not only have to work all day, but to sit up all night. I really think I am much better in bed, for remember that if I once begin to take up this agreeable occupation of putting everybody right, I shall not only have to clear the Afrikander Bond of charges of disloyalty, but I shall also have to clear other people of the charge which I have often heard, and which is at least equally unreasonable, of wishing to oppress the Dutch subjects of Her Majesty in this colony. As a matter of fact, there is no party and no person who has any such desire. No, gentlemen, it is perfectly evident to me that it is the Governor's duty to keep as clear as he can of all this partisan mud-throwing, and not to give it additional importance by dwelling upon it. Let him rather use whatever influence he may happen to possess to promote harmony, mutual respect, and the co-operation of all parties for those objects of general utility which are so numerous and so urgent. Let him attempt to direct men's thoughts and attention to their great interests in the development of the country, for which almost everything still remains to be done, and in the intellectual and moral elevation of its

various races—not only of the two great white races, but also of the coloured races—for which there is certainly still much to be done.

Of course I am glad to be assured that any section of Her Majesty's subjects are loyal, but I should be much more glad to be allowed to take that for granted. Why should I not? What reason could there be for disloyalty? You have thriven wonderfully well under Her Majesty's rule. This country, despite its great extent and its fine climate, has some tremendous natural disadvantages to contend against; and yet, let any one compare its position to-day with what it was at the commencement of Her Majesty's reign, or even thirty years ago. The progress in material wealth is enormous, and the prospects of future progress are greater still. And you have other blessings which by no means always accompany material wealth. You live under an absolutely free system of government, protecting the rights, and encouraging the spirit of independence, of every citizen. You have courts of law, manned by men of the highest ability and integrity, and secure in the discharge of their high functions from all danger of external interference. You have, at least as regards the white races, perfect equality of citizenship. And these things have not been won from a reluctant sovereign. They have been freely and gladly bestowed upon you, because freedom and self-government, justice and equality are the first principles of British policy. And they are secured to you by the strength of the power that gave them, whose navy protects your shores from attack, without your being asked to contribute one pound to that protection, unless you yourselves desire it. Well, gentlemen, of course you are loyal. It would be monstrous if you were not.

And now if I have one wish, it is that I may never again have to deal at any length with this topic. But in order that I may put it aside with a good conscience, I wish, having been more or less compelled to deal with it to-night, to do so honestly, and not to shut my eyes to unpleasant facts. The great bulk of the population of this colony,

Dutch as well as English, are, I firmly believe, thoroughly loyal, in the sense that they know they live under a good Constitution and have no wish to change it, and that they regard with feelings of reverence and pride the august lady at the head of it. If we had only domestic questions to consider, if political controversy were confined in this colony to the internal affairs of the country, there would no doubt be a great deal of hard language used by conflicting parties, and very likely, among the usual amenities of party warfare, somebody would call somebody else disloyal. But the thing would be so absurd, so obviously absurd, that nobody would take it seriously, and the charge would be forgotten almost as soon as uttered. What gives the sting to the charge of disloyalty in this case, what makes it stick, and what makes people wince under it, is the fact that the political controversies of this country at present unfortunately turn largely upon another question—I mean the relations of Her Majesty's Government to the South African Republic—and that, whenever there is any prospect of a difference between these two parties, a number of people in the colony at once vehemently, and without even the semblance of impartiality, espouse the side of the Republic. Personally, I do not think that they are disloyal. I am familiar at home with the figure of the politician —often the best of men, though singularly injudicious—who, whenever any dispute arises with another country, starts with the assumption that his own country must be in the wrong. He is not disloyal, but really he cannot be very much surprised if he appears to be so to those of his fellow-citizens whose inclination is to start with the exactly opposite assumption. And so, in this case, I do not take it that people are necessarily disloyal, because they carry their sympathy with the Government of the Transvaal (for, seeing the close tie of relationship that unites a great portion of the population here with the dominant race in that country, such sympathy is perfectly natural), to a point which gives some ground for the accusation, that they seem to care much more for the independence of the

Transvaal than they do for the honour and the interests of the country to which they themselves belong.

For my own part, I believe the whole object of those people in espousing the cause of the Transvaal is to prevent an open rupture between that country and the British Government. They loathe, very naturally and rightly, the idea of war, and they think that, if they can only impress upon the British Government that, in case of war with the Transvaal, it would have a great number of its own subjects at least in sympathy against it, that is the best way to prevent such a calamity. But herein they are totally wrong. For this policy of theirs rests on the assumption that Great Britain has some occult design on the independence of the Transvaal—an independence which she herself has given; and that she is seeking causes of quarrel, in order to take this independence away. But that assumption is the exact opposite of the truth. So far from seeking causes of quarrel, the constant desire of the British Government is to avoid causes of quarrel, and not to take up lightly the complaints (and they are numerous) which reach it from British subjects within the Transvaal; for the very reason that it wishes to avoid even the semblance of interference in the internal affairs of that country, while, as regards external affairs, it insists only on that minimum of control which it has always distinctly reserved, and has reserved, I may add, solely in the interests of the future tranquillity of South Africa. That is Great Britain's moderate attitude, and she cannot be frightened out of it. It is not any aggressiveness on the part of Her Majesty's Government which now keeps up the spirit of unrest in South Africa. Not at all. It is the unprogressiveness, I will not say retrogressiveness, of the Government of the Transvaal, and its deep suspicion of the intentions of Great Britain, which causes it to devote its whole attention to imaginary external dangers, when every impartial observer can see perfectly well that the real dangers which threaten it are internal.

Now I wish to be perfectly fair. Therefore let me say

that this suspicion, though absolutely groundless, is not, after all that has happened, altogether unnatural. I accept the situation that at the present moment any advice that I could tender, or that any of your British fellow-citizens could tender, to the Government of the Transvaal, though it might be the best advice in the world, would be instantly rejected, because it was British. But the same does not apply to the Dutch citizens of this colony, and especially to those who have gone so far in the expression of their sympathy for the Transvaal, as to expose themselves to these charges of disloyalty to their own flag. Their good-will at least cannot be suspected across the border, and if all they desire—and I believe it is what they desire—is to preserve the South African Republic, and to promote good relations between it and the British Colonies and Government, then let them use all their influence, which is bound to be great, not in encouraging the Government of the Transvaal in obstinate resistance to all reform, but in inducing it gradually to assimilate its institutions, and what is even more important than institutions, the temper and spirit of its administration, to those of the free communities of South Africa, such as this colony or the Orange Free State. That is the direction in which a peaceful way out of these inveterate troubles, which have now plagued this country for more than thirty years, is to be found.

I am afraid that I have spoken to-night at inordinate length. It is not often that I make a speech of any duration. But I have laid down for myself two rules about such unfortunate differences as may and do arise between parties in this colony. One is, not to mention them at all if I can help it—to keep my eyes continually fixed upon the great common interests which unite men of different races, rather than upon the differences which divide them. My other rule is that, when I am forced to speak on these subjects, I shall do so frankly and without reserve. I am not sure if that is the way to win immediate popularity, although I seem to be getting on fairly well to-night. But, what-

ever may be the personal consequences, I feel sure that this course is the best way to clear the air, to remove inveterate misunderstandings, and to promote in the long run those objects which all good men and loyal citizens have at heart.

## CAPE TOWN.—JUNE 24, 1899

[In the interval between the Graaf Reinet speech and the present one, the political situation in South Africa had become more acute than ever. The quarrel between the Uitlander population and the Transvaal Government had developed to a point at which twenty thousand of the former petitioned Great Britain as the suzerain Power for assistance in obtaining the redress of their grievances. In the British Colonies the population of British race sympathised intensely with the Uitlanders, while the Dutch ranged themselves increasingly on the side of the Transvaal Government. A conference between President Kruger and Sir A. Milner, at which the latter urged strongly the enfranchisement of the Uitlanders, was held at the end of May 1899 in Bloemfontein, and ended in failure. On Sir A. Milner's return to Cape Town, a powerful deputation of the Colonial British waited upon him to express approval of his policy, and urge the necessity of the Imperial Government continuing to support the claims of the Uitlanders. This speech was delivered in reply to their address.]

MR. EBDEN AND GENTLEMEN,—I need hardly say that I am deeply grateful for your expression of sympathy and support. It is rather difficult to choose words in which to reply to it. At a time of anxiety like the present, one is anxious to avoid any word which could possibly do harm. At the same time, a few words may do good if they tend to clear the issue. As you are all aware, the recent Conference led to no result. It led to no result because the whole discussion turned on the question of the franchise, and on that no agreement was possible. It may be asked, Why was so much weight attached to this one question? Well, I fully admit the franchise is only a means to an end, and the end is to obtain fair play for the Uitlander population in the South African Republic. That is the main concern which Her Majesty's Government has in view—the protection of the Uitlander population, containing as it does so large a

proportion of British subjects. My view was, and is, that the best way to help these people, best for them, best for the Republic, and best for the good relations between the Republic and Her Majesty's Government, is to put them in a position to help themselves.

It may be that I conceded too much, it may be that I went too far in giving other questions the go-by for the moment, and directing all my efforts to secure for the Uitlanders a position within the State. But my view was this: it was a unique opportunity. To have pressed for the redress of Uitlander grievances one by one, to say nothing of other subjects of difference, would have been to engage in an irritating controversy, and to spoil the chance of an amicable compromise on broad lines going to the root of the differences. That controversy, which I was so anxious to avoid, may have to come yet, but my object at the Conference was to avert it. It seemed best to strike straight at the root of the evil by giving the people, whose interests Her Majesty's Government is bound to defend, such a share of political power as would enable them gradually to redress their grievances themselves, and to strengthen, not to weaken, the country of their adoption in the process. But just because I was relying on a single remedy, it was absolutely essential that that remedy should be a radical one.

It was useless, indeed worse than useless, and would only have led to worse trouble later on, to have accepted a scheme so framed, I do not say so designed, as not to bring people in, but to keep them out—a scheme hedged in with restrictions of the most elaborate kind, and hampered with a condition which I knew that numbers of people would never accept, and which one could not reasonably urge them to accept.[1] If this Reform Bill was not going to

[1] *I.e.* the abandonment, by a man desiring to naturalise, of his old citizenship for seven or seven and a half years, before getting full rights under his new citizenship. Because of this principle, 'the majority'—says Sir E. T. Cook, *Rights and Wrongs of the Transvaal War*—'would not naturalise, while even if they got naturalised, no considerable proportion of old residents would obtain the vote in less than five years.' Further, 'the measure of redistribution was very small. A large majority

bring a considerable number of Uitlanders into the State, if the enormous majority, including all the leaders, were still to remain outside, how was it possible to feel any confidence in such a solution, or accept it as a comprehensive settlement ?

As against this, it is urged that my simpler plan would have deluged the State with new citizens. I am convinced that this is not so. Having regard to the obligations of burghership, and to other reasons which will, in any case, deter many Uitlanders from applying for it, and to the conditions as to length of residence and proper qualification which I was quite prepared to make, I feel sure that the number of new citizens would not have been anything like so great as was supposed. And however numerous they might have been, the old citizens would have controlled for a long time the bulk of the constituencies. They, too, are increasing rapidly in number, and long before they could have been outnumbered, if they ever were outnumbered, the process of fusion would have begun to set in. Moreover, it is not as if the Uitlanders were all of one kind or one mind. They are of various nationalities, and represent different interests and opinions. The President told me (he was very strong indeed on the point) that he had a petition from Uitlanders, in favour of the Government, signed by an even greater number of people than signed the petition to Her Majesty. Well, then, what was there to fear ? Half the new-comers, on his own showing, would have been on his side, and many, I am sure, who are now opposed to him—opposed, as you may say, to the State because they are excluded from it—would be loyal citizens the moment they were in the State.

No doubt it is a difficult business to get different races to

of the inhabitants contributing nearly the whole revenue would be represented by five members (or seven ultimately) out of thirty-one. Lastly, even if a considerable number of Uitlanders accepted the conditions of naturalisation, they would find themselves hindered by a long series of barbed-wire impediments.' 'These conditions,' in the words of Mr. Robson, K.C., M.P.—now Lord Robson—'were of such a character as to make the period of qualification utterly unimportant. It might as well be seventy years as seven. . . . A grotesque and palpable sham.'

pull together inside one body-politic. That is the problem over all South Africa. But it is solved in other parts of South Africa, more or less. It would be solved altogether and for ever, if the principle of equality could be established all round. It is the one state, where inequality is the rule, which keeps the rest in a fever. And that is bound to be universally recognised in time. Meanwhile, for the moment, the attempt to get things put on their true basis has not succeeded, and we have to face the resulting situation. Some remedy has still to be found to remove, at least in some measure, the grievances of the Uitlanders, and to allay their discontent.

I am absolutely convinced that those grievances, though sometimes stated in exaggerated language, are very real. It has over and over again been my duty to call attention to the fact. And there is another aspect of the case which has been forced upon me as High Commissioner, having to bear in mind the interests of South Africa as a whole. Is it consistent with the position of Great Britain in regard to this country—nay, is it consistent with the dignity of the white race—that a large, wealthy, industrious, and intelligent community of white men should continue in that state of subjection, which is the lot of the immigrant white population of the Transvaal? That is a position which we have, by some means or other, however gradual, however pacific, to get them out of.

I see it is suggested in some quarters that the policy of Her Majesty's Government is one of aggression. I know better than any man that their policy, so far from being one of aggression, has been one of singular patience, and such, I doubt not, it will continue. But it cannot relapse into indifference. Can any one desire that it should? It would be disastrous that the present period of stress and strain should not result in some settlement to prevent the recurrence of similar crises in the future. Of that I am still hopeful. It may be that the Government of the South African Republic will yet adopt a measure of reform more liberal than that proposed at Bloemfontein. If not, there

may be other means of achieving a desired result. In any case it is a source of strength to those who are fighting the battle of reform, and will, I believe, contribute more than anything else to a peaceful victory, to feel that they have, as they never had before, the unanimous sympathy of the British people throughout the world.

## CAPE TOWN.—APRIL 12, 1900

[In the interval between the preceding speech and this one, war had broken out, the British Colonies had been invaded, and, encouraged by the initial successes of the Boers, ten thousand British colonists of Dutch extraction had gone into rebellion and joined the enemy. Then, following the arrival of Lord Roberts in South Africa, the tide of war turned; Kimberley and Ladysmith were relieved, and at the time when this speech was delivered, Lord Roberts had captured Bloemfontein, the capital of the Orange Free State, and was preparing to march on Pretoria. The issue of the war was no longer doubtful, but great anxiety existed among the British colonists lest the Boer Republics should be allowed to continue to exist. A deputation of leading Nonconformists in Cape Colony waited upon Sir A. Milner to urge the necessity of annexing the Republics and bringing the whole of South Africa directly under the British flag.]

I THANK you for coming here to-day to present me with this address. Emanating as it does from a body of men so representative, whose deliberate opinion on a question of the highest public importance is entitled to so much weight, I cannot but feel that it is an event of unusual importance. You represent, I think, all the great Nonconformist religious bodies of this town and neighbourhood. Your attitude is typical of the unequalled unanimity and strength of conviction which exists among the Nonconformists of South Africa, with regard to the great struggle at present convulsing this country. The men whom I see here to-day, and their fellow ministers throughout South Africa, are not in the habit of obtruding their opinions on political questions. It is a unique crisis which has brought them into the arena, and the exceptional character of their intervention lends additional weight to the temperate, but strong and clear, statement of their posi-

tion which has just been placed before me. As regards myself personally, I cannot but feel it is a great source of strength at a trying time, to be assured of the confidence and approval of the men I see before me, and of all whom they represent.

You refer to my having to encounter misrepresentation and antagonism. I do not wish to make too much of that. I have no doubt been exposed to much criticism and some abuse. There has, I sometimes think, been an exceptional display of mendacity at my expense. But this is the fate of every public man who is forced by circumstances into a somewhat prominent position in a great crisis. And, after all, praise and blame have a wonderful way of balancing each other if you only give them time. I remember that, when I left England for South Africa three years ago, it was amidst a chorus of eulogy so excessive that it made me feel thoroughly uncomfortable. To protest would have been useless—it would only have looked like affectation. So I just placed the surplus praise to my credit, so to speak, as something to live on in the days—which I surely knew must come sooner or later if I did my duty—when I should meet with undeserved censure. And certainly I have had to draw on that account rather heavily during the last nine months. But there is still a balance on the right side which, thanks to you and others, is now once more increasing. So I cannot pose as a martyr, and what is more important, I cannot complain of any want of support. No man placed as I have been in a position of singular embarrassment, exposed to bitter attacks to which he could not reply, and unable to explain his conduct even to his friends, has ever had more compensation to be thankful for than I have had in the constant, devoted, forbearing support and confidence of all those South Africans, whether in this colony, in Natal, or in the republics, whose sympathy is with the British Empire.

In the concluding paragraph of your address you refer, in weighty and carefully considered terms, to the conditions which you deem necessary for the future peace and

prosperity of South Africa, and for the ultimate harmony and fusion of its white races. I can only say that I entirely agree with the views expressed in that paragraph. The longer the struggle lasts, the greater the sacrifices which it involves, the stronger must surely be the determination of all of us to achieve a settlement which will render the repetition of this terrible scourge impossible. 'Never again' must be the motto of all thinking, of all humane men. It is for that reason, not from any lust of conquest, not from any desire to trample on a gallant, if misguided, enemy, that we desire that the settlement shall be no patchwork and no compromise, that it shall leave no room for misunderstanding, no opportunity for intrigue, for the revival of impossible ambitions, or the accumulation of enormous armaments. President Kruger has said that he wants no more Conventions, and I entirely agree with him. A compromise of that sort is unfair to everybody. If there is one thing of which, after recent experiences, I am absolutely convinced, it is that the vital interests of all those who have to live in South Africa, of our present enemies as much as of those who are on our side, demand that there should not be two dissimilar and antagonistic political systems in that which Nature and History have irrevocably decided must be one country. To agree to a compromise which would leave any ambiguity on that point, would not be magnanimity. It would be weakness, ingratitude, and cruelty, ingratitude to the heroic dead, and cruelty to the unborn generations.

But when I say that, do not think that I wish to join in the outcry, at present so prevalent, against the fine old virtue of magnanimity. I believe in it as much as ever I did, and there is plenty of room for it in South Africa to-day. We can show it by frank recognition of what is great and admirable in the character of our enemies, by not maligning them as a body, because of the sins of some, perhaps even of many individuals. We can show it by not crowing excessively over our victories, and by not thinking evil of every one who for one reason or another

is unable to join in our legitimate rejoicings. We can show it by striving to take care that our treatment of those who have been guilty of rebellion, while characterised by a just severity towards the really guilty parties, shall be devoid of any spirit of vindictiveness, or of race prejudice. We can show it above all, when this dire struggle is over, by proving by our acts that they libelled us who said that we fought for gold or any material advantage, and that the rights and privileges, which we have resolutely claimed for ourselves, we are prepared freely to extend to others, even to those who have fought against us, whenever they are willing loyally to accept them.

## CAPE TOWN.—April 20, 1900

[From a speech in reply to an address from 'The Guild of Loyal Women' of Cape Colony. The situation at the time when these words were spoken was practically the same as that described on page 16.]

What I specially welcome about the statement of principles contained in your address is its wide outlook, its appreciation of what is meant by citizenship of the British Empire. That is what we all need so greatly, not only in Cape Colony, or in the Colonies generally, but quite as much in Great Britain itself, the wider patriotism. Do not think it is inconsistent with local patriotism. Quite the reverse. The latest political red herring is an attempt to confuse the minds of men about the real issue at the bottom of the present struggle—which is simply whether this country shall be inside or outside the British Empire —by representing it as a struggle between patriotic South Africans and men whose interests and sympathies lie outside this country. In future, we are told, we are only to have two parties here—South Africans and Uitlanders. But the difficulty of this ingenious idea is that it takes two to make a fight. Before you can get two bodies of men to engage in combat they must both exist, and, as it happens, there is no such thing in existence, either here or

in Great Britain, as an Uitlander party, if that means a party which wishes to see South Africa governed in any other interest than its own. I am, I believe, supposed to be a typical Imperialist. Speaking as an Imperialist, I can only say that it is not only consistent with my political creed, but it is an essential part of it, that South Africa should be governed in the interest and by the agency of the people whose lives are bound up in her, who feel for her, and who work for her, as their home.

But the spirit of local patriotism, which I, for one, desire to see strengthened, not weakened, is liable to two aberrations. It is a mistake to think that such patriotism can only be found, or only exist in full measure, in born South Africans. Nothing can be more unwise in a young country than to make distinctions between those who are born in it and those who have come from outside, provided they are equally attached to it, equally prepared to serve it as their home. And it is even a greater and more fatal mistake to regard devotion to South Africa as inconsistent with, much more as antagonistic to, devotion to the British Empire. If there is one thing of which I am absolutely convinced, it is that the highest interests of South Africa herself make for her inclusion in that great association of free and self-governing communities, known as the British Empire, the existence of which, as a unit of invincible power, is essential to the maintenance of the political ideals which these communities have in common, and which mean so much for the whole future of humanity.

## CAPE TOWN.—MAY 22, 1900

[From a speech replying to an address presented by the Salt River Workmen. The date of this speech, of which only the following passage is preserved, is a little later than that of the two preceding ones. In the interval the tide of war had been moving steadily in favour of the British. It was obvious that the Boer forces had been broken up, and no one as yet suspected that two years of guerilla warfare were still to be gone through before the resistance of their scattered bands could be finally overcome.

Sir A. Milner, who from the time of the Bloemfontein Conference onwards had been violently attacked by the Afrikander Bond party in Cape Colony, and by the pro-Boers at home, now became the object of many demonstrations of sympathy and support, accompanied by exhortations to persist in his policy, from the British and Dutch loyalists. One of these was a deputation from the workmen at the Salt River Railway Works, the largest body of organised artisans in the colony, who, like the industrial population generally, were mostly British by race and very British in sympathy. On the day when this deputation waited on the Governor, it was widely rumoured and generally believed that Mafeking had been relieved, though authentic news of its relief had not been received. Sir A. Milner about this time was as much concerned to restrain the exultation and excessive optimism of his supporters as he had been a few months earlier to keep up their drooping spirits.]

But I think there is another feeling besides admiration for heroism which we have towards the defenders of Mafeking. We admire heroism I hope, even in those of our enemies who have displayed it, and there are many of them. Do not let us forget when we condemn, as we rightly condemn, acts of treachery and barbarity, which have undoubtedly been committed, that these have been on the whole exceptional, and that the conduct of the enemy, in the main, has been that of brave men, fighting, indeed, in my opinion, for a very bad cause, but for a cause which many of them believed to be a right one; and that they therefore are entitled to respect. I am not sure if this is altogether a popular sentiment just now, but it is a right one. But I say there is another feeling besides admiration, which we must have towards the defenders of Mafeking, I mean gratitude for their enormous services, not only to this colony but to the Empire. These services can never be forgotten. I believe as firmly as any one that they are all right at Mafeking, but whatever happens there, its defenders have rendered services for which you and I have got to be grateful to our last day. I notice in your address and in the speeches delivered that you refer to the future before this country when the war is over. I do not anticipate a time of great prosperity coming with all that rapidity which some people seem to

anticipate, but I do know this, that, sooner or later, a time of great prosperity is undoubtedly assured to South Africa, and is so assured in consequence of the war and of the manner in which the war has resulted. When I say that, I am thinking not only of the future that lies before this country in the way of material development, but of the enormously improved social and political conditions under which that development will now proceed. I am not thinking only what a wonderful country, one of the most wonderful in the world, South Africa is going to be for skilled workmen, whether they be skilled in manufactures or in the practice of agriculture. I am thinking of the fact, that in future they are going to flourish in this country and develop as freemen, that education is going to make a great start, and that the development before us, far from being confined to material conditions, is going to be intellectual and moral also. However we may deplore the war, its result will be to remove an enormous incubus which rested upon the moral no less than the material progress of this great country. And if this be so, what do we not owe to the men who kept that Boer army hammering away at Mafeking for months, while we down here were practically undefended, who gave the reinforcements from home time to come, and who even at the last moment held a large force of the enemy idle and useless for the general purposes of the campaign, in its vain attempt to overcome their invincible resistance and endurance? We owe much to Mafeking.

## CAPE TOWN.—JUNE 28, 1900

### *Sale of Intoxicating Liquor to Natives*

[Among the deputations waiting on Sir A. Milner about this time—see note to previous speech—was one which came to urge the necessity of putting a stop to the sale of liquor to natives in the territory of the Boer Republics. At the date of this deputation the Orange Free State had just been formally annexed to the British Empire, under the title of the 'Orange River Colony,' but no similar step had as yet been taken with

regard to the Transvaal, which still remained 'The South African Republic.' Sir A. Milner, as appears from the following speech, was not a little embarrassed at this time, when the war was still in course, and the conquest of the Boer states far from completed—as a matter of fact it took nearly another two years to complete—by the number of suggestions showered upon him with regard to the future administration of countries which were not yet in any sense under his jurisdiction. He had, however, no doubt as to the policy of preventing the sale of liquor to natives, and at a subsequent stage, when he actually was Governor of the Transvaal, one of his first acts was to give effect by legislation to the promise with which this speech concludes.]

I NEED hardly say that I shall have very great pleasure—in fact I shall regard it as a duty—to transmit this petition to the Secretary of State for submission to Her Majesty, and I am sure that it will be considered at home with all that regard to which the labours and experience of those here present entitle it. I had some doubts, when first asked to receive this deputation, whether I ought to do so now, because I think all discussions as to the future legislation and administration, certainly of what is still the South African Republic, and to some extent even of the Orange River Colony, are a little premature. But I reflected that between the date of the presentation of a petition of this kind, and the moment when it has passed through all the necessary official channels and actually reaches the people whom it is intended to influence, a considerable time must elapse; and, therefore, I thought it was perhaps only just to give you this amount of start in bringing your views before the Government and the people of England. I can help you to that extent, and perhaps having said so much, I ought to say no more, indeed anything more that I may say is a matter of self-indulgence, because really I have no *locus standi* in this case other than that of the transmitter of your message to those who have it in their power to decide on the question of policy. At this moment I do not know in the least what system of administration Her Majesty's Government propose to introduce into the new territories, nor who the agents of that administration are likely to be. Therefore, in what I am

going to say, I shall speak for once with a pleasing sense of comparative irresponsibility, and with the feeling that I am pledging nobody but myself. My words will have no more weight than those of any other person speaking with a certain amount of knowledge of the conditions of South Africa.

Now, addressing you in that simple character, I can say that I absolutely and entirely agree with the views put before me. This is a subject on which I feel very strongly. I have always felt it a tremendous responsibility which the white races of South Africa took upon themselves, when they claimed to be masters and rulers of the black races. Of course they are so by virtue of their superior strength. But I suppose none of us as Christians would be content to feel that we governed merely by virtue of our superior strength, and that there was no moral justification for the rule which we exercised. You can only justify the rights that white men in this country claim over black by using those rights for the benefit of the subject race, and not merely for your own convenience. And there can be no doubt, in this case, which course is most in the interest of the subject race. I believe it is the universal experience of those who are best acquainted with the conditions of native life, that there is nothing in the world more important for the preservation and the elevation of the native than to prevent him from coming into contact with intoxicating liquors, and if you cannot prevent that contact altogether, then to restrict it as much as possible. Now there are very many questions affecting the black races in South Africa which are extraordinarily difficult, because of the supposed conflict between the interest of the blacks and the interests of the whites ; but this seems to me to be a question in which there is no such conflict, for everything that the moralist and the philanthropist and the Christian can urge in favour of prohibition from his point of view, is enforced and supported by what the captain of industry and the economist has to say from his. I think there is really very seldom a conflict

of interest between black and white, if questions are properly understood, but at any rate there is no conflict in this instance. And therefore, unlike many problems which South African government presents, this question does not appear to me a difficult one to decide, in principle. I think our duty with regard to it is particularly clear, and I think our duty is comparatively easy.

So much for the question of principle. Looking at it as a matter of practice, we find that in the Orange River Colony there is a good law on this subject, well enforced; and, speaking as a practical man, I cannot suppose that Her Majesty's Government, with so much that is rotten in the state of South Africa to claim their attention, will be anxious to disturb anything that has been found by experience to be sound. In the Transvaal the situation is different. I am not so well acquainted as I ought to be with the details of the legislation of the Transvaal on this subject, but I take it that the authorities who are most competent to speak with regard to it are pretty nearly unanimous that the law itself is a good law. But it is a matter of common knowledge that it has been very badly administered, and consequently the condition of intoxication which prevailed among the natives was one of the greatest scandals under the late Government. Well, gentlemen, we made a great row about it, I amongst others. I have spoken in dispatches—I do not know whether they have been published or not—over and over again very strongly about the gross scandal of the illicit liquor traffic in the Transvaal, and others have spoken in the same sense. Of course we were told that our criticisms were exaggerated; of course we were told that it was one of the innumerable tricks of the capitalists and their tools—like myself—to throw discredit upon the Republican Government, and get up a quarrel between it and the Government of Great Britain, and that we did not really care about the condition of the natives. But I did and do care most intensely. There is no subject on which I have felt more strongly. There is nothing which has grieved me more than to know

of the existence of that terrible demoralisation, and to feel that Her Majesty's Government, which, after all, never intended entirely to abandon the natives in any part of South Africa, was unable to do anything to check it. What I said on that subject I meant, and I mean it now, and nothing that my voice or influence can do shall be left undone, in order that that scandal may not continue under British rule. I believe every Englishman would be ashamed if it were to continue even for six months under the flag of Great Britain.

## CAPE TOWN.—NOVEMBER 9, 1900

[Towards the close of 1900 the second phase of the struggle in South Africa, the guerilla war, had assumed formidable proportions. The prolongation of resistance in the newly-annexed territories was accompanied by a recrudescence of sedition and agitation throughout Cape Colony. The first rebellion in that colony, which followed the initial successes of the Boer armies, had promptly collapsed on the victorious advance of Lord Roberts. Martial law was withdrawn immediately on the surrender of the rebels, although at a later stage it was once more found necessary to have recourse to it, in a more stringent form and for a longer period. The leniency thus shown to the surrendered rebels, and the prompt return to 'constitutional' government, encouraged the Bond party in the colony to fresh exhibitions of their sympathy with the enemy across the border. Violent attacks continued to be made in the Press and on the platform upon the conduct of the British troops, the policy of the British Government, and upon Sir A. Milner personally. This agitation culminated a few months later in the second rebellion in Cape Colony, which greatly extended the area of guerilla warfare, and enhanced the difficulty of putting an end to it. That task had now fallen to Lord Kitchener, who, on Lord Roberts's return to England, had just assumed the chief command of the British forces in South Africa.

The agitation of the Bond led to counter-manifestations on the part of those who sympathised with the British cause.

The 'League of Loyal Women,' at a meeting of which Sir A. Milner made the following speech, was one of the most active organisations on the loyalist side.]

IT is nearly five months since my first and last appearance at a meeting of this Guild. I am glad to congratulate you

on the immense progress which you have made in the interval. The manufacture of sedition in this colony goes on merrily as before. Powerful bellows are always being blown to fan the flame of race hatred, and to play upon the passionate prejudice against Great Britain which exists among a large section of the population, and which is the legacy of an unhappy past. That fire is destined to burn itself out, despite all the efforts of the bellows-blowers. But in the meantime it is going to cause much havoc. It is your part to do what you can in the interval to quench the flames, and to circumscribe their ravages. I know it is no easy task. We must all feel a deep sympathy with the scattered loyalists in certain parts of this colony where they are a small minority, without whose efforts the voice of reason and of truth would never reach the ears of the majority of the people of those districts, knowing as they do only one language, and hearing only one side of the story. Such efforts often entail great hardships upon those who make them. In some cases their sufferings may only amount to social discomfort, but in others, I am sorry to say, they reach the pitch of serious persecution. It is difficult under such circumstances to hold the straight course and avoid opposite errors : on the one hand, never to compromise with the sedition-mongers—there has been too much toying with treason in the past ; on the other hand, never to lose patience with, never to cease making allowances for, those who are misled. The future of loyalty in this country is after all mainly a question of education. You have got to teach, and no good teacher ever loses her temper. Let us leave the monopoly of hysterics to the other side. Hard words break no bones. If they did I should not have a whole bone left in my body, and yet, as you observe, mine are absolutely intact. No, let us leave hard words to others. It is for us, for you and for me who believe in the reason, who believe in the justice, who believe in the victory of the cause of Queen and Empire, to show the temperateness of strength, the temperateness of profound conviction, the spirit which should animate

all the men and women who mean to persevere to the end, in the struggle for an absolutely good cause. Only one word more and I have done. South Africa to-day is passing through a crisis of extraordinary severity and of great duration. To the suffering of regular warfare has succeeded an undisciplined, straggling, purposeless resistance, involving all, and more than all, the horrors of war without any of its dignity. It is difficult to appreciate the motives of the men who are urging their fellow-countrymen on to that hopeless struggle, kept up by deceit and leading to nothing but destruction. But I think it would be a mistake to take too despondent a view of this additional calamity. The forces of Her Majesty the Queen, which are engaged now in establishing order and laying the foundation of a stable peace in South Africa, are called upon to confront a totally new problem, and new methods have to be devised to deal with it. These methods are being devised and they will succeed. Let us frankly confess that we have all been too apt to think we were at the end of our troubles. But I see now some tendency to fall into the opposite error. Let us acknowledge that we are by no means out of the wood, but don't let us have the least doubt that the jungle is not impenetrable. And above all, the greater our troubles to-day, the stronger must be our conviction of the necessity of efforts like those on which you are engaged, efforts to prevent for ever a recurrence of these terrible events, by gradually converting the minds and hearts of our opponents from their present hopeless policy, which can lead to nothing but perpetual discord, to a frank acceptance of the position of citizens of the free-est Empire in the world, and to co-operation with us in building up a better South Africa.

## CAPE TOWN.—DECEMBER 11, 1900

[The following speech was delivered at the height of the Bond agitation in Cape Colony, which preceded and led to the second rebellion. During

the later months of 1900 guerilla warfare was going on in almost all parts of the Orange River Colony and the Transvaal, but it had not as yet extended to the Cape Colony. The ground for that extension was, however, being assiduously prepared by the vehement and inflammatory language of the leaders of the Bond, and especially by the Dutch clergy, who were unwearied in denouncing the conduct of the war on the British side, and in manifesting their sympathy with the enemy. The agitation culminated in the Annual Congress of the Bond, which was on this occasion held at Worcester in Cape Colony. The Resolutions of that Congress were subsequently presented to Sir A. Milner at Cape Town by a deputation of leading Bondsmen, with the request that they should be transmitted to Her Majesty's Government.

The Resolutions were as follows:—

(1) 'We, men and women of South Africa assembled and represented here, having heard the report of the people's deputation to England, and having taken into earnest consideration the deplorable condition into which the peoples of South Africa have been plunged, and the grave dangers threatening our civilisation, record our solemn conviction that the highest interests of South Africa demand —(1) A termination of the war now raging, with its untold misery and horror, as well as the burning of houses, the devastation of the country, the extermination of a white nationality, and the treatment to which women and children are subjected, which was bound to leave a lasting legacy of bitterness and hatred, while seriously endangering the future relationship between the forces of civilisation and barbarism in South Africa; and (2) the retention by the Republics of their independence, whereby alone the peace of South Africa can be maintained.

(2) 'That this meeting desires a full recognition of the right of the people of this Colony to settle and manage its own affairs, and expresses its grave disapproval of the policy pursued and adopted in this matter by the Governor and High Commissioner, Sir Alfred Milner.

(3) 'That this Congress solemnly pledges itself to labour in a constitutional way unceasingly for the attainment of the objects contained in the above resolutions, and resolves to send a deputation to His Excellency Sir Alfred Milner to bring these resolutions officially to the notice of Her Majesty's Government.'

After hearing the deputation, the High Commissioner replied]:—

I ACCEDE to your request to bring these resolutions to the notice of Her Majesty's Government. I think it is doubtful whether I ought to do so, but in view of the prevailing

bitterness and excitement it is better to err, if one must err, on the side of conciliation and forbearance. And, having regard especially to the fact that one of the resolutions is directed against myself, I wish to avoid any appearance of a desire to suppress its companions on account of it. But having gone thus far on the road of concession, I take the liberty, in no unfriendly and in no polemical spirit, of asking you quite frankly what good you think can be done by resolutions of this character? I am not now referring to the resolution directed against myself. That is a matter of very minor importance. The pith of the whole business is in resolution number one, a resolution evidently framed with great care by the clever men who are engineering the present agitation in the colony. Now that resolution asks for two things—a termination of the war, and the restoration of the independence of the republics. In desiring the termination of the war we are all agreed, but nothing can be less conducive to the attainment of that end than to encourage, in those who are still carrying on a hopeless resistance, the idea that there is any, even the remotest chance, of the policy of annexation being reversed. I am not now speaking for myself. This is not a question for me. I am simply directing your attention to the repeatedly declared policy of Her Majesty's Government, a policy just endorsed by an enormous majority of the British nation,[1] not only by the ordinary supporters of the Government, but by a great number of those ordinarily opposed to it. Moreover, that policy is approved by all the great self-governing colonies of the Empire, except this one, and in this one by something like half the white population, and practically the whole of the native. And this approving half of the white population, be it observed, embraces all those who, in the recent hour of danger, when this colony itself was invaded and partially annexed, fought and suffered for the cause of Queen and Empire. I ask you is it reasonable to suppose that Her Majesty's Government is going back upon a policy deliberately

[1] At the General Election of 1900.

adopted, repeatedly declared, and having this overwhelming weight of popular support throughout the whole Empire behind it? And if it is not, I ask you further: What is more likely to lead to a termination of the war—a recognition of the irrevocable character of this policy, or the reiteration of menacing protests against it? And there is another respect in which I fear this resolution is little calculated to promote that speedy restoration of peace which we have all at heart. I refer to the tone of aggressive exaggeration which characterises its allusions to the conduct of the war. No doubt the resolution is mild compared with some of the speeches by which it was supported, just as those speeches themselves were mild compared with much which we are now too well accustomed to hear and to read in the way of misrepresentation and abuse of the British Government, British statesmen, British soldiers, the British people. But even the resolution, mild in comparison with such excesses, is greatly lacking in that sobriety and accuracy which is so necessary for us all to cultivate in these days of bitterly inflamed passions. It really is preposterous to talk, among other things, about 'the extermination of a white nationality,' or to give any sort of countenance to the now fully exploded calumny about the ill-treatment of women and children. The war, gentlemen, has its horrors—every war has. Those horrors increase as it becomes more irregular on the part of the enemy, thus necessitating severer measures on the part of the Imperial troops. But, having regard to the conditions, it is one of the most humane wars that has ever been waged in history. It has been humane, I contend, on both sides, which does not, of course, mean that on both there have not been isolated acts deserving of condemnation. Still the general direction, the general spirit on both sides, has been humane. But it is another question whether the war on the side of the enemy is any longer justifiable. It is certainly not morally justifiable to carry on a resistance involving the loss of many lives and the destruction of an immense quantity of property, when the object of

that resistance can no longer, by any possibility, be attained. No doubt, great allowance must be made for most of the men still under arms, though it is difficult to defend the conduct of their leaders in deceiving them. The bulk of the men still in the field are buoyed up with false hopes—they are incessantly fed with lies, lies as to their own chance of success, and, still worse, as to the intentions of the British Government with regard to them should they surrender. And for that very reason it seems all the more regrettable that anything should be said or done here which could help still further to mislead them, still further to encourage a resistance which creates the very evils that these people are fighting to escape. It is because I am sincerely convinced that a resolution of this character, like the meeting at which it was passed, like the whole agitation of which that meeting is part, is calculated, if it has any effect at all, still further to mislead the men who are engaged in carrying on this hopeless struggle, that I feel bound, in sending it to Her Majesty's Government, to accompany it with this expression of my strong personal dissent.

## CAPE TOWN.—MAY 7, 1901

[Shortly after the preceding speech, in the last days of 1900, some of the guerilla bands operating on the north of the Orange River broke back into Cape Colony. The Dutch population of the northern districts of the colony, who had been violently excited by the Bond agitation already referred to, joined the invaders in considerable numbers. The experiences of the previous rebellion were forgotten—all the more readily perhaps because of the great leniency shown to the rebels after its suppression—and most of the young farmers of Dutch race in the north and north-west of the colony took the field on the Boer side. The consequence was a great extension of the area of guerilla warfare in South Africa, which was kept up thenceforward by roving bands, now at one point and now at another, throughout almost the whole extent of Cape Colony, until the very close of the war. A very large British force had consequently to be employed in that colony; martial law was proclaimed, first in one district and then in another, till it finally embraced

the whole country; constitutional government was completely suspended; and during the whole of 1901 the Cape Parliament did not meet, expenditure being defrayed by Governor's warrants in anticipation of Parliamentary sanction.

Early in 1901 Sir Alfred Milner was transferred from the Governorship of the Cape Colony, in which post he was succeeded by Sir Walter Hely Hutchinson, to that of the two new colonies, but retaining the High Commissionership, so that the supreme control of British civil administration in South Africa still rested in his hands. He left Cape Town for Johannesburg, which now became his official place of residence, in the beginning of February. His first business was to engage, in conjunction with Lord Kitchener, in negotiations with the Boer leaders, who, at the instance of General Botha, showed some disposition to desist from further resistance to the British army. The negotiations, however, broke down, owing to the refusal of the Boers to accept the incorporation of the Republics in the British Empire. After the failure of negotiations, Sir Alfred Milner spent several months in organising the civil administration of those portions of the new colonies, including all the principal towns, which had been definitely occupied by the British, and in preparing for the extension of that administration to the whole of the country, as soon as the war should be over. In May, however, he returned to England for some months, nominally on leave, but really in order to confer personally with Mr. Chamberlain and other members of His Majesty's Government on the South African situation.

On his way through Cape Town he was entertained by the Town Council. The majority of the citizens of Cape Town had always sided strongly with the British cause, and at this juncture, and indeed right up to the end of the war, they, in common with the other South African loyalists, were not a little uneasy lest the pro-Boer agitation in England should shake the British Government in its determination to bring the whole of South Africa definitely and irrevocably under the British flag. These sentiments found vigorous expression on the occasion in question, and it was in reply to them that Sir A. Milner spoke as follows] :—

Let us look away from the ever-changing froth on the surface of public opinion to the silent depths beneath. Nothing in the whole of this weary business is more remarkable, nothing is more profoundly satisfactory, than the manner in which the British nation throughout the world, when at last awakened, have set their teeth in unmistakable earnestness to put an end, once for all, to the uncertainty, the conflict of incompatible ideals which made

peace and progress in South Africa under the old system impossible. Flinching from no sacrifice, daunted by no disappointment, turning a deaf ear to the babel of voices for ever tending to confuse and smother the one cardinal point under a number of side-issues, they have gone straight on the way on which they were set from the first,—to make an end of this business, to bring one country under one flag, with one system of law and government—a liberal and a just one ; and to leave no room for the recrudescence of the ambitions that have plunged us into those terrible disasters from which we are now slowly emerging. If I were not absolutely confident of that, I should not be taking a return ticket to-day. Were any evidence needed—and I do not see how the careful observer could need any evidence of this unshakable purpose of the British people —I think it would be found in the reception which has been accorded to the communications which recently passed between the Commander-in-Chief and General Botha. For one voice which was raised to blame Lord Kitchener or myself, or His Majesty's Government, for having adopted too stiff an attitude, there were scores of protests against what were regarded—wrongly regarded, I believe—as symptoms of a tendency to purchase peace by a dangerous compromise. Mind, I do not admit for one moment that these protests were justified. I believe they were due almost entirely to a misunderstanding of the actual position. I merely refer to them as evidence of the fact that, so far from there being any weakening in public opinion, the unmistakable bent of that opinion is to be even over-anxious lest anything should be done which could possibly jeopardise the stability of the future settlement, even for the great object of putting a stop to further bloodshed and devastation. I confess that I can sometimes hardly repress a smile when I get letters—and I get plenty of them just now—impressing upon me that it is the interest of the loyalists that ought first to be considered. Well, gentlemen, if ever there was a case of carrying coals to Newcastle ! Here have I been preaching for years, in

season and out of season, and in the teeth of bitter obloquy, the duty of the Empire to the South African loyalists. Times out of number I have called attention to the utter folly of the fatal old trick of for ever giving away your friends in the idle hope of conciliating your enemies. But where I perhaps differ from some of my friends is in a tendency to look ahead, in a habit of trying to form a mental picture of the time when those who have been our enemies in the past—and many of those who are our enemies even to-day—will no longer be our foemen but our fellow-citizens, and many of them I believe sound and true ones. It is my impression—I may be wrong, but I do not think so—that not a few of those who have been the sturdiest in their allegiance to their old flag, when once the conflict is over, when once they have accepted the situation, will be equally faithful to their new allegiance. And if that is so, then surely it is a point of honour for us to let them see that we have absolutely no vindictive feeling as regards the past; that if they are once prepared frankly to accept their position as citizens of our Empire, the same rights and privileges, ay, and the same solicitude for their welfare on the part of the Government, will be extended to them as to their older fellow-citizens. Once let them be frankly and whole-heartedly within the pale, and there should be no distinction. The old and the new citizens have got to coalesce into one nation; and all I can say is, that if for cherishing these hopes I am called weak and gullible, I must just bear the reproach with such equanimity as I can, and trust that it will do me no more harm than all the things I have been called in the opposite camp, such as heartless, bloodthirsty, arrogant, a prancing pro-consul, an Egyptian satrap, and all the rest of it.

## LONDON.—May 26, 1901

[On his arrival in England on leave, on May 25, 1901, Sir Alfred Milner was welcomed at Waterloo by the Prime Minister—Lord Salisbury—Mr. Chamberlain, and other leading members of the Government, and

received at Marlborough House by His Majesty, who raised him to the peerage. The following day he was entertained at a luncheon, at which H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge was in the chair, and when again all the principal members of the Government were present. In replying to the toast of his health Lord Milner said] :—

YOUR Royal Highness, Mr. Chamberlain, my Lords, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I am so taken aback by the reception which has been given to me yesterday and to-day that I cannot find words, and, what is more, I am afraid I cannot find ideas altogether suitable to the occasion. To tell the honest truth, I am rather ashamed to be here at all with a big unfinished job awaiting me and with so many men, my fellow-workers, but in positions far more dangerous and more physically exhausting than my own, who are not able to take the rest which they both deserve and need. In these circumstances it would have been more pleasant to me, and, I believe, in a rational world it would have seemed better to all of us, that I should have arrived, and stayed, and returned in the quietest possible manner. But I fully recognise that, in an age when it seems impossible for many people to put a simple and natural interpretation upon anything, my doing so would have been misconstrued, and misconstrued in a manner and to a degree which would have been injurious to the interests of the State. If the fact that the leave that I asked for—accorded certainly in the kindest manner, but with the most evident reluctance on the part of His Majesty's Government—if this hard-begged holiday could be represented as a veiled recall, then, of course, it was obvious that, had I taken the proverbial hansom from Waterloo to my old chambers, that very harmless action would have been trumpeted over two continents as evidence of my disgrace. It is hard, it is ludicrous that some of the busiest men in the world should be obliged to occupy their time, and that so many of my friends and well-wishers should be put to inconvenience—and on a day, too, when it would be so nice to be in the country—merely in order to prove to persons with an ingrained habit of self-delusion that the British Govern-

ment will not give up its agents in the face of the enemy, and that the people of this country will not allow themselves to be bored into abandoning what they have spent millions of treasure and so many precious lives to attain. All I can say is that if it was necessary—I apologise for it, I am sorry to be the centre of a commotion from which no man could be constitutionally more averse than myself—I say, if it was necessary, I can only thank you heartily for the kindliness and the cordiality with which the thing has been done. I feel, indeed, that the praises which have been bestowed, the honours which have been heaped upon me, are beyond my deserts. But the simplest thing to do under these circumstances is to try to deserve them in the future. In any case, I am under endless obligations. It is difficult to say these things in the face of the persons principally concerned, but I feel bound to take this opportunity, especially in view of the remarks which have been made in certain quarters, to express my deep sense of gratitude for the manner in which His Majesty's Government, and especially my immediate chief, have shown me great forbearance and given me support, most prompt at the moment when it was most needed, without which I should have been helpless indeed. And I have also to thank many friends, not a few of them here present and some not present, for messages of encouragement, for kindly words of suggestion and advice received at critical moments, some of which have been of invaluable assistance to me, and have made an indelible impression upon my heart. I am afraid if I were to refer to all my benefactors it would be like the bidding-prayer and you would all lose your trains. But there is one hint which I may take from the bidding-prayer. Not only in this place, but at all times and in all places, I am specially bound to remember the devotion of the loyalists—the Dutch loyalists if you please, and not only the British—of the loyalists of South Africa. They responded to all my appeals to act and, harder still, to wait. They never lost their cheery confidence in the darkest days of our misfortunes. They never faltered

in their fidelity to a man, of whose errors and failings they were necessarily more conscious than anybody else, but of whose honesty of purpose they were long ago and once for all convinced. If there is one thing most gratifying to me on this memorable occasion, it is the encouragement which I know the events of yesterday and of to-day will give to thousands of our South African fellow-countrymen, like-minded with us, in the homes and in the camps of South Africa. Your Royal Highness, Mr. Chamberlain, Ladies, and Gentlemen,—I am sure you will not desire me to enter into any political questions to-day. More than that, I really have nothing to add to what I have already said and written—I fear with wearisome iteration. It seems to me that we are slowly progressing towards the predestined end. Latterly it has appeared as if the pace was somewhat quickening, but I do not wish to make too much of that or to speak with any too great confidence. However long the road, it seems to me that it was the only one to the object which we were bound to pursue, and which seems now fairly in sight. What has sustained me personally—if your kindness will allow me to make a personal reference—what has sustained me personally on the weary road is my absolute, unshakable conviction that it was the only one which we could travel. Peace we could have had by self-effacement. We could have had it easily and comfortably on those terms. But we could not have held our own by any other methods than those which we have been obliged to adopt. I do not know whether I feel more inclined to laugh or to cry when I have to listen for the hundredth time to these dear delusions, this Utopian dogmatising, that it only required a little more time, a little more patience, a little more meekness, a little more of all those gentle virtues of which I know I am so conspicuously devoid, in order to conciliate—to conciliate what?—panoplied hatred, insensate ambitions, invincible ignorance. I fully believe that the time is coming—Heaven knows how we desire to see it come quickly—when all the qualities of the most gentle and forbearing statesmanship which are pos-

sessed by any of our people will be called for and ought to be applied in South Africa. I do not say for a moment there is not great scope for them even to-day, but always provided that they do not mar what is essential for success in the future, the conclusiveness of the final scenes of the present drama. And now I am afraid, after all, I have trespassed on the field of politics, not, I hope, at any great length. I will stop short and only once more thank you, which I do from the bottom of my heart, for the great cordiality of your welcome home, which has exceeded all my deserts and thrown me on my beam-ends, being contrary to all my expectations.

## LONDON, THE GUILDHALL.—July 23, 1901

[On July 23rd of that year, Lord Milner was presented with the freedom of the City of London. In the course of his speech, acknowledging this honour, he said]:—

It is difficult for me, without seeming to use exaggerated language, to express how deep is my sense of the greatness of the honour just conferred upon me. The freedom of the City of London—the premier city of the British Empire——is one of the greatest, as it is one of the most coveted distinctions that can be bestowed upon any public servant.

The fact that you have done me this great honour is a fresh proof of the wonderful generosity with which the British people are disposed to treat those of their fellow-countrymen who are called upon, whether in a military or civil capacity, to battle for the interests of the Empire abroad, especially when they seem to be confronted with great difficulties. The impulse to back a man who is thought to be trying to do his best in a tight place, the tendency to appreciate his efforts, to sympathise with his difficulties, not to be too much down on his mistakes, is a national characteristic. I do not mean to say that it is an absolutely universal attribute. We

have now among us, as we have had in all times of great external pressure, a certain section of the community who are predisposed to think the worst of their fellow-countrymen—to believe readily every accusation against them, to attribute preposterous motives to them, and to give vent to anti-national bias in language vying in intemperance with that of the subsidised traducers of Great Britain in foreign lands. But these aberrations only serve to bring out in stronger relief the very different temper which animates the great bulk of the nation. It would be gross ingratitude in any public servant, exposed though he might be to the sort of criticism which I have just described, if he were to make an outcry, or to pose as a martyr, when he has such splendid compensation on the other side in the kindly, forbearing, sympathetic judgment of the great majority of his countrymen, whose approval is at once the highest reward and the strongest encouragement which can be accorded to him.

The great national issue which lies at the bottom of the South African War is, I believe, now recognised by the vast majority of thinking men. It may not even now be as clear as it will appear in the pages of history, but for all practical purposes it is evident already. And that issue having once been clearly raised, there is virtually no difference of opinion among the great majority of the British people as to the answer which must be given with regard to all the main questions involved. Deep and universal as is the longing for peace, anxious as we all are to make conditions easy to every honourable enemy, there are, I think, few indeed who would be willing to purchase peace by any concessions that might compromise the future, or to run the risk of popularising rebellion by treating repeated, deliberate, and crime-stained treason as a venial offence. There is surely an immense difference, morally speaking, between those stout old burghers who still adhere to their original leaders in the ex-Republics, and the roving ruffians —British subjects if you please—who are harrying their fellow British subjects in our own colonies. But side by

side with the general determination to bring this struggle to an honourable and a conclusive close, there is, if I do not greatly misread the minds of my fellow-countrymen, a no less general resolve to treat the burghers of the two late Republics, when the war is over, with such fairness and even with such generosity as will help them to accept the position, and, in the long run, to acquire the sentiment, of British citizenship. We must show them—we will show them—in the noble words of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, that 'if they have lost their independence, they have not lost their freedom.' Now these are, I believe, points of almost general agreement among the British people to-day, irrespective of party. And, last but not least, there is now a general recognition, which at one time was certainly far from being strong enough, of the true character and the splendid devotion to the Empire of the South African loyalists, Dutch as well as English; of their importance to us, and of our duty to them. Let us beware in trying to win—as I believe we shall win—the hearts of our former enemies, lest we alienate the confidence of those who have all along been our friends. For my own part, I have great confidence in the efficacy of impartial and incorruptible government, of a bold development of the vast natural resources of the country, and of the gradual and prudent introduction of self-governing institutions, to heal old sores, to create new interests, and gradually to bring divers sections of the people to co-operate for the good of their common country.

## CAPE TOWN.—September 2, 1901

[From a speech in reply to the Civic Welcome given to Lord Milner on his return to South Africa.]

. . . The people of South Africa have the future of South Africa in their own hands. The people of South Africa—the loyal people of South Africa—can make what they will of this country, and should do all they can to establish here

a great free nation, one of a group of nations individually independent, but associated in a permanent, indissoluble federation, under the greatest and most venerable of existing monarchies.

## MARITZBURG.—OCTOBER 15, 1901

[Although he had never personally visited Natal, the relations between the High Commissioner and the people and government of that colony throughout the crisis had been very intimate, and there was no part of South Africa in which Lord Milner's policy, both before and during the war, had been more cordially supported. Natal, moreover, was at this time the temporary home of a considerable number of the Transvaal British, who had been expelled at the outbreak of war and were still unable to return.

Lord Milner made only two speeches of any importance during this visit to Natal—at Pietermaritzburg and Durban. Only very imperfect reports of these speeches are extant; indeed, in the case of the Maritzburg speech nothing is preserved except the following sentences, delivered in the course of a reply to an address from the citizens.]

IT seems a strange thing that I should have been four years, and more than four years in South Africa, without ever entering Natal, especially when I remember that during more than half of that time I have been so intimately associated in public affairs with the loyal population of this colony, and have learnt to regard them as such staunch allies of the High Commissioner, and such steadfast supporters of the Imperial cause. I will not attempt to express to-day what, in common with all the loyalists of South Africa, in common with all friends of the British Empire throughout the world, I feel with regard to the services of this colony to the common cause. Eloquent tributes have been paid to your services and to your brave endeavours; the greatest statesmen of Great Britain have dwelt upon this theme in stirring language; and, more than that, your sovereign has expressed to you his recognition of the value of the loyalty of Natal. If you will allow me to make the remark, I felt as proud as if I had myself been a Natalian when I read this well-deserved compliment to your patriotism.

It is a pleasure to me to make the personal acquaintance of the people of Natal; it has also been a satisfaction to see with my own eyes the land at a time when it is in its greatest beauty. When I woke up this morning—not very late—and looked for the first time upon the green fields of Natal, and on signs not too common in South Africa to-day of peaceful cultivation and prosperity, it was the fairest spectacle that my eyes have looked on for many and many a day. It is a pleasure to think that as Natal was the first to bear the brunt of the war, she is also the first in recovery and recuperation. I cannot help thinking of a remark which is much too often heard nowadays, that loyalty does not pay in South Africa. It is an odious remark, because it seems to suggest that loyalty is a question of pounds, shillings, and pence, and yet I am sure that the most loyal of loyalists would hasten to repudiate that interpretation. At the same time, though loyalty does not work for reward, it is an evil state of things in which loyalty lacks its reward, in which disloyalty is able to crow over it. But is that really the situation in South Africa to-day? I know that many loyal people have suffered, alas! that many are still suffering. Who knows it better or feels it more keenly than I do? But in the meantime if loyalty is suffering, can it be said that treason has cause to rejoice? Does it pay? I wish those people who speak so glibly about loyalty not paying would reflect and compare the condition of Natal—perhaps not all we could wish, but still rescued, promising, prosperous—with the terrible condition of those wide districts in the sister colony in which rebellion has been rife. Certainly the condition of those districts is sad and distressing to us. It is more distressing to their inhabitants, thousands of whom are ruined to-day for taking the part of rebels and traitors rather than loyalists.

But it will not be your wish that I should go at large into political questions. It always seems to me one of the most severe handicaps of public men, that they are expected to make so many speeches. To make a speech on a subject

about which you know much, or want to say something, is all very well; but to make speeches at large on complimentary occasions is to move among pitfalls. And so, with your permission, I do not propose to put my foot into it to-day. And there is an excellent reason why I should not attempt to do so, and that is that the object of my visit to Natal is rather to make acquaintance with your minds than to expose any views of my own. I have not come here to lecture, but to learn. After all, I think that what I want is pretty notorious by now. I want a peaceful, prosperous South Africa, one great community under the British flag. That, I presume, is what you all want, and that is the end towards which we have got to direct our steps in future. But the first condition of sound co-operation is a frank exchange of views and mutual confidence. And so I have come to try by such an exchange of views to ensure our working together cordially in the future for the union of South Africa. If we are to have a united South Africa, it cannot be by any dictation from without. The people of South Africa must accomplish it for themselves. And they must not approach the question as Natalians, or as Rhodesians, or as Cape Colonists, but as South Africans.

## DURBAN.—October 21, 1901

[Six days after his reception at Maritzburg—see previous note—Lord Milner received a similar public welcome at Durban, in acknowledging which he spoke as follows]:—

I wish I could have congratulated you when coming here to-day on the fact that not only Natal but all South Africa was at rest; but I felt that I ought not to delay my visit to Natal until it was possible to say that the war was over. In a formal sense it may never be over, but may just slowly burn itself out, as it is doing now. In the subsidence of every great conflagration you may see the flames keep breaking out over and over again, first in one place and then in another, and some of these spurts are very fierce and look

very alarming, but still they come to nothing, because there is nothing left for the fire to feed upon, and the moment the hoses are turned on they die down. We have had such an experience lately, and we must be prepared to have such experiences again. But regrettable as it is that lives should still be lost from day to day, regrettable as it is that large parts of South Africa should be in a state of ruinous disorder, I think it would be a great mistake to allow these circumstances to prevent our gradually resuming our normal life, and re-starting in the conquered territories not only industry but even to some extent agriculture. More is being done in that respect than people generally are aware of, but personally I am of opinion that still more can and ought to be done in the near future, and that we ought to show ourselves masters of the house which we have taken by rebuilding it and beginning to live in it.

I have one charge to bring against Natal, but it is a very serious charge. My charge against the people of Natal is that there are not enough of them. I know it may appear unreasonable to complain of lack of numbers in view of the sea of faces now before me. I know I shall be told to look at your towns, to look at Maritzburg, to look above all at Durban. I shall be told to see how they are extending in every direction, how their prosperity increases, and how their population increases. Quite true, and it is deeply satisfactory and a subject for rejoicing and congratulation ; but that is not all that has to be thought of. How about the land of Natal ? It is called a small country, and it may appear small compared with some of the vast, though much less fertile, territories which adjoin it ; but there are, I believe, exclusive of Zululand (to which I don't wish to refer because that is a separate subject), twenty thousand square miles of it at least, and how many people are there on it ? Of course we have not a very accurate census, but I have inquired of those who ought to know best, and I think I am safe in saying there are not twenty thousand white people outside the large towns, and certainly

not more than one white person engaged in agriculture for every square mile ; or, if you look not on men, women, and children, but at men only, one man for every four square miles. I say without hesitation it is not nearly enough. I am perfectly well aware that the bulk of the manual labour in this country must be done, not by white men, but by the coolie and by the Kaffir ; but I say that the white population on the land in Natal is greatly insufficient adequately to do, as it ought to be done, even that work which is proper for the white man, and which the white man alone can properly perform. There are not enough of you, and, what is more, unless the people themselves take this matter up and impress it upon their public men, there never will be enough. Why should your experience be different from that of the other great colonies of the British Empire ? They have all found that town populations and industrial populations increase of their own accord, but that in order to increase the population on the land, and especially in order to bring upon the land settlers of the right quality, State direction and State encouragement are necessary. You must have governmental action if you want to see the same results as the great colonies beyond the seas have achieved. If you want to remove from Natal the reproach, which is common to all the colonies in South Africa, namely that they are not making enough use of their land, you must take the same course as other colonies have taken, and give active encouragement to settlers of the right sort, the right race, and the right principles, to come and settle among you and strengthen you. And remember that the present time is an unparalleled opportunity. We have now in South Africa thousands of men who would make excellent settlers. I do not believe that you have only got to put a man, whatever he may be and whatever previous experience he may have had, upon the land, and that he will necessarily make a good settler. It wants a special kind of man, a man of special capacity and special experience. But among the thousands, who are at present temporarily in this country as a consequence

of the war, there are great numbers who have just the capacity and experience that are required, who would be willing to settle, who are anxious to settle, who only want encouragement to settle; and you have need of these men.

Now I am not preaching anything which I am not perfectly prepared to practise. Let me tell you this: the Governments of the new colonies will be only too anxious, as soon as the time is ripe, to attract as many as they can of these suitable settlers. Now I am not sure that I am not giving away a good thing by saying what I do to-day to the people of Natal; but my feeling is this, that I can't look upon any of these questions from the point of view of one South African colony, even if I happen to be personally charged with its affairs, more than from that of another. I look at these questions from the broad South African point of view. I see these suitable men, this possible great and useful addition to our South African population, and I want to see them spread abroad over the country in all the colonies, strengthening everywhere the progressive and loyal elements of the population, and everywhere helping to give to the land that fair chance, that proper treatment, which is required before you can attain to that height of material development to which you are entitled and which is before you. I look upon it as a question of material prosperity, and also, to be honest, I look upon it even more as a great political question. From that point of view I am anxious to reinforce Natal in the general interests of South Africa. What we want is a strong Natal, and you must forgive me if I have spent rather a long time this afternoon in trying to point out to you in what direction you must look to increase that strength. We want a strong Natal to co-operate in the production of a strong united South Africa, that ideal to which we all look, and towards which in my last words to-day I wish to direct your attention, whether you be refugees from the Transvaal, or people of Durban or other parts of Natal—the ideal of a great united nation, one of a group of sister nations spread throughout the world, united and not divided by

ocean, each independent in its own concerns, all indissolubly allied for a common purpose, all free and willing subjects of the most ancient and august monarchy in the world—what we mean in short by that great term, the British Empire.

## JOHANNESBURG.—JANUARY 8, 1902

[The following speech, the last of any importance delivered by Lord Milner before the end of the war, can only be understood in connection with the very extraordinary condition of the Transvaal at that time. Guerilla warfare was still going on throughout the greater part of the country, and though the strength of the Boer resistance was being steadily worn down by the strategy of Lord Kitchener, the Boers continued from time to time to achieve small but dramatic successes—the capture of a convoy, or the ambushing and rout of an incautious column—which greatly impressed the South African and still more the British public, and led to a mistaken belief that the end of the war, which had already lasted so much longer than at the outset seemed possible, was much further off than it actually was.

At the same time, with war still raging all around them, the people of Johannesburg were busily resuming their former industry. The mines were resuming work, business was once more becoming active, and there was a constant pressure upon the Governor, both to permit the return of a greater number of the British exiles than the military authorities, with the difficulty of keeping up supplies always before them, thought wise; and to proceed with the organisation of civic life, and with all sorts of municipal improvements, suitable to normal conditions and to times of peace.

Under these circumstances the position of the head of the civil administration, who was at the same time responsible for advising the Home Government about the general conduct of South African affairs, was a very difficult one. He had to do his best to satisfy the civil population anxious to increase its numbers and restore the ordinary course of business, subject to the paramount demands of the military authorities, who were with justice intent solely on finishing the war. At the same time, he had to contend with a growing tendency both in South Africa and at home, but especially at home, to take a despondent view of the duration of the war, and to lend an ear to insidious suggestions for shortening it, by making advances to the enemy, involving the sacrifice of some part at least of the objects for which the war was being waged. He was convinced that any attempt at compromise at this stage was both unwise

and unnecessary, that it would not shorten but prolong the struggle, and that it only needed a little more persistence, as indeed proved to be the case, to bring the struggle to an end. A banquet, given by the newly appointed Municipal Council to celebrate the resumption of civic life in Johannesburg, gave him an opportunity of expressing his views on these several subjects, and it was on this occasion, on the 8th of January 1902, that the following speech was made]:—

My best thanks are due to you, Mr. Chairman, for the kind and sincere words in which you have proposed my health, and to the company for the cordiality of their reception. I feel very deeply the honour of this welcome on the part of all the combined great bodies of Johannesburg, and I appreciate its auspicious unanimity. We meet to-night under very unique conditions, in the centre of a country devastated by a war of exceptional length and destructiveness, and yet in a hopeful spirit. Every one here present has suffered to a greater or lesser extent; almost every one has had losses—I am not thinking so much of material losses, which are almost wholly retrievable, as of human and personal losses, to which one almost hesitates to refer. There are gaps in the ranks of the citizens of Johannesburg. Some of the best known, some of the most respected, the most beloved, men of ability, of character, of great public spirit, as well as many others less conspicuous but not less admirable in their courage and devotion, have fallen victims to war, or to its fell companion, pestilence. Their graves are scattered over South Africa. Some day I trust a worthy memorial will be erected to them in this city, which is commonly supposed to care only for gold, but which in my experience is second to none in its respect for manhood. In any case, they have a monument in our hearts, and if they could speak to us we should doubtless know that that was what they valued most.

This is not the only shadow which rests upon us. There is the shadow of the many bitter disappointments of the past two years, and of the grave anxieties of the future. If, in spite of all these, a hopeful spirit is prevalent among us, if men are bracing themselves up to face the problems before

them with a confident belief in their capacity to solve these problems, what is the cause ? I think it is not merely the fact of the improved external conditions, the fact that communications are freer, more stamps are dropping, more people are returning to their homes. There is a deeper-lying reason than that. It is the feeling that the storm-cloud which so long hung over South Africa has burst. The storm is not yet over, but it has already cleared the air, and men breathe more freely than they did in the thunder-laden atmosphere of the past. The great cataclysm is behind and not before us, and it would require an almost inconceivable degree of folly and mismanagement ever to lead South Africa up to a similar disaster. I do not deny that there are counsellors who, if they were listened to, might accomplish even that extraordinary feat. The post-Majuba settlement still has its admirers, and though they do not aspire to revive it in all its beauty, they still look forward to producing a very fair reproduction. They regretfully admit that we have all got to live under one flag, but they are full of ingenious suggestions, by which that symbol of unity may be made to mean as little as possible, and the old political dualism may be kept up in substance if not in form. But the people of Great Britain will have none of this. The people of Great Britain are not going over to the pro-Boers. Those worthy people make a great noise ; they encourage the enemy—they give support to the campaign of calumny with which we are assailed in foreign countries. At home they darken counsel ; they may even to some extent weaken action ; but they produce no durable and effective impression upon British public opinion, which remains as sound as ever on South African questions—hating the war, regretting but recognising its necessity, determined not to be cheated of its results.

Of course there are moments of despondency—can it be wondered at under the circumstances ?—and the friends of the enemy play upon them for all they are worth. One of their genial devices is to pretend that the war is never

coming to an end unless we go on our knees to the enemy and ask them to stop. The war, gentlemen, will end all the quicker if we rely simply on steady physical pressure without fidgeting about negotiations. It is no use to threaten, it is no use to wheedle. The only thing is imperturbably to squeeze, and to keep our clemency and our conciliation—both excellent qualities in their place—for the Boers who surrender, instead of lavishing our blandishments on those who still continue to fight. But these prophets of evil are not satisfied with dwelling upon the endlessness of the war. Even more persistent lamentations are devoted to the terrible state of things which is going to follow it. It is a curious fact that the anti-national party in Great Britain is always in the doleful dumps. Years ago, and for years, they were always blubbering about Egypt. They drew such a dreadful picture that I almost think I began blubbering myself. But that was a long time before I knew anything about the subject. We have got to make up our minds that for the next year or two the same persistent jeremiads will have to be listened to about South Africa. We must put up with them with what patience we can. For my own part, gentlemen, I do not believe in this terrible future.

The task of the soldier has been one of almost inconceivable difficulty, but given a clean finish the task of the statesman will not be equally difficult. I am the last man in the world who has any interest in minimising its difficulties, and I am not minimising them. The task will be laborious ; it will take much time. But there is nothing insoluble, to my mind, about its many problems, provided that the peoples of the Empire retain the same clearness of sight with regard to South African matters as they have already shown patience and resolution. The danger of our getting in a muddle is not here ; the danger is on the other side, and it consists in this, that the people at home may not see South African matters in their true proportions. I say deliberately the people at home, for I see no similar tendency in our great sister colonies. Their strong

common-sense patriotism is a great stand-by, not only on the field of battle. But, then, they have no pro-Boers to bemuse them. The worst and the most dangerous of all the dis-services which that party has rendered to our country, is that by their eternal clamour they keep the thoughts of their countrymen with regard to South Africa in one particular rut. They will never convert them to pro-Boerism, but they do make the figure of the Boer loom too large in the British imagination. 'Will this form of settlement conciliate the Boers, or will that form of settlement conciliate them better?' 'Such and such a policy may be all very well, but will it annoy the Boers?' Morning, noon, and night it is Boers, Boers, Boers. But what of all the rest of South African humanity? What of the people of Natal? What of the people of Rhodesia? What of the loyalists of the Cape, including the Dutch loyalists—who feel very bitterly that with the tendency to take sham loyalty for true coin, the existence of some true coin is apt to be forgotten? What after all of this little place? And what of those of our enemies who have come over to our side, and no inconsiderable number of whom are actually fighting for us to-day in order to bring peace to their country? Are we forgetful of the necessity of doing nothing which can possibly put them in the wrong? Of course it is needless to say that the moment the Boer surrenders the pro-Boer takes no further interest in him whatsoever. His interest, his affection, is entirely centred in the Boers who are still fighting, and in their dependants; but as a nation, we really cannot indulge this high degree of altruism at the expense of our friends. I do not mean to say that a man ought to allow himself to be led even by his friends. A great politician once said: 'Any man can stand up to his opponents; give me the man who has the courage to stand up to his friends,' and there is a deep truth in that. But he did not say: 'Give me the man who leaves his friends out of account.' It would be absurd to suppose that the people of Great Britain do not care about the loyalists of South Africa. Never has any country

made such tremendous sacrifices for a small and distant section of its people. But the people of Great Britain may possibly be tempted, taking for granted the attachment of the South African loyalists, to think too exclusively in the immediate future about winning over those who have opposed them. That would be a great mistake, and it would be a gratuitous mistake, because the bulk of South African Britishers are themselves conciliatory in their attitude. They do not want to eat the Boers. They are perfectly aware that they must remain an important element, though they will no longer be the dominant element. What is more, they have a shrewder notion of how really to win them than some of the theorists at home.

I know that in saying this I shall be told I am showing my usual want of impartiality. But it has never occurred to me to be impartial as between the friends and the enemies of the British connection. I am as partial to the former as apparently the pro-Boers are to the latter. There is a total misapprehension on the part of those who tell us that what we have to do is to hold the balance even between the anti-British party and the anti-Dutch party. There is no anti-Dutch party in South Africa, and there never has been. There is a pro-British party, including 99 per cent. of the British and of the better-class Americans and Europeans, and a considerable number of the Dutch ; and there is an anti-British party, including the rest of the Dutch and the international riff-raff. And the true policy of Great Britain is to encourage and work through the British party, including—yes, most decidedly including—those of our former enemies who have honestly and whole-heartedly thrown in their lot with us, or who may yet do so, and thereby add to the attractiveness of that party for the waverers on the other side ; while the wrong policy is to sow distrust in the British party, and especially the Dutch converts to it, by playing up to the irreconcilables. That is teaching the worst of all lessons, the lesson that it pays better to fight Great Britain to the last gasp than to agree with her in season.

Well, Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, we are all British partisans here to-night, and in consequence I feel a very great partiality for you. I am very much more partial—Heaven forgive me—to you than I am to General President Steyn, or General Botha, or General De Wet—and the form which my partiality takes at this moment is a very deep anxiety to see you develop to the utmost the grand opportunities which this place affords for a great civic life. I think the world outside has a very dim conception what these opportunities are. The common view of Johannesburg is that of a great mining camp, where men go to get rich, and from which wise men escape as soon as possible, and I do not deny that it will always have the disadvantages of any great manufacturing centre; but what great manufacturing centre has such immense corresponding advantages? The abundance of room, the brilliant air, the open surrounding country of great natural beauty and fertility, still unspoilt, and capable of almost infinite improvement—with these natural resources of climate, of soil, and of scenery; with your extraordinary wealth, and with a vigorous, enterprising, and now a liberated people, it would be a strange failure indeed if this did not become a city to be proud of, one of the great cities of the world. But no government can achieve this for you—though a bad government might prevent it. The citizens of Johannesburg have got to achieve it for themselves, and my belief is that they will achieve it, if only a sufficiently big conception of the possibilities of this home of yours, and of your duties to it, 'catches on,' if I may venture to use such an expression, from the first. Of course the danger is that every man will be so busy with his own affairs that only the failures and the people 'on the make' will devote themselves to the affairs of the municipality. That will be avoided if the leaders of the community realise from the first all that is at stake.

For my own part, I think that the making of a great municipality is enough to attract any ambition, but in this case the government of the municipality involves questions

of the highest politics. For a great Johannesburg—great not only in the number but in the character of its inhabitants, in their intelligence, their cultivation, their public spirit —means a British Transvaal. A British Transvaal will turn the scale in favour of a British South Africa, and a British South Africa may go a long way to consolidate the British Empire. That, and all that, is involved in the details, sometimes dull details, of your municipal life,— in your water supply, your tramways, your parks, your schools, in your attaining for yourselves the full equipment of the highest standard of civilised life. If I might be permitted to give my advice to the people of Johannesburg, I should say to them : ' Pitch your ideal sufficiently high from the outset ; go for a big thing. Don't be content with shabby makeshifts or temporary expedients ; don't be content with anything less than making this a model city—a city built for permanence, fully equipped with all the essentials of health, comfort, and of culture, not only for the few but for the great bulk of its inhabitants.' In saying this, I don't want you to think that because I live in Johannesburg myself, and see what can be made of it, I therefore wish to aggrandise this place at the expense of other places, of Pretoria for instance, or of the great, growing towns of the coast colonies, of Rhodesia, or of Natal. My duty is to all South Africa. I shall never cease to preach against particularism, to exhort not to any local but to a South African patriotism. But this is precisely a case in which the growth of one does not damage, but on the contrary advantages, all the others. That is the beauty of the situation. The prosperity which flows from here enriches all South Africa, and not its towns only but the country—that great, neglected, under-populated, under-cultivated country, the interests of which must always lie at the heart of any decent government, and which certainly requires more direct assistance to make the most of itself, than is required by a place like this with its immense original resources.

And now, gentlemen, I have said a great deal about the

end. Let me, in conclusion, say a few dull, practical words about the means. There is a great deal of talk about self-government, but this is a matter in which we must proceed step by step ; and the first step—that which clearly is alike the most necessary and the most safe—is to grant very wide powers of self-government to this place and to Pretoria. But self-government implies popular election, and you cannot have a popular election till the people, till the mass of the people, have returned, until they have had time to turn round and settle in their homes. And yet your wants are urgent, and, in the interests of the absent people themselves, above all in their interests, it is necessary that some of those wants should be immediately attended to. It is in order to meet this case that the Government, as you are aware, have created here a Council which, though not elective, is yet, I believe, truly representative, and which, when some additions that are contemplated in the early future are made to it, will be more representative still. But then I am asked : ' Is it competent for this Council, resting on no basis of popular election, to do anything more than attend to the most ordinary daily requirements of the town, such as removing rubbish or patching up a road ? ' I say to that, ' Yes, certainly it is ; go ahead.' I do not wish to encourage schemes that are doubtful or too ambitious. I do not think it is judicious to frighten people by talking of five, or any other number of millions of pounds, although, to the Johannesburg of say 1904, five millions will not appear a very extraordinary thing. But these schemes under consideration are of two kinds—I am talking of the big schemes. There are those which, under any circumstances, are not yet ripe for solution, such matters as water supply and the question of the sewage of the town. These could not, in any case, be dealt with immediately, although I am in favour, and most strongly in favour, of pursuing with the greatest vigour the study of them. But there are other matters not so large as these perhaps, but still of considerable magnitude, which are urgent, and immediately necessary. I refer to such

matters as tramways, lighting, the clearance of insanitary areas. You cannot let the enormous population, which is going to accumulate here, accumulate in a city of which part may become a pest house. If the present Council, although it is not elective, sees its way to dealing with these questions in an effective and practical manner, then I say that I think it would be justified, and, with the assistance of the Government, it would be able to raise the necessary means.

Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, I cannot go into greater detail on this subject to-night. It would be an intolerable tax on your patience; but perhaps I have said enough to indicate my general attitude. My feeling is that there is an immense amount of work to be done, and that we cannot afford to lose any time here in beginning to do it. I know there are those who say that all serious constructive work must wait for the end of the war. I am precisely of the opposite opinion. I do not mean to say that, while the war continues, military considerations must not be paramount, and military authority must not prevail. On the contrary, I am opposed, under present circumstances, to setting up a complete civil government in competition with the military; but subject to military necessities, and to the liability of all able-bodied British citizens to maintain their military efficiency—a duty which I think it unmanly to shirk—subject to this, I am in favour of resuming as fast as possible the normal life of the community. I think we should bestow a fictitious importance upon the enemy in their present reduced condition if we allowed them to paralyse the whole industry of the country. The transition from a state of war to a state of peace seems likely to be gradual. Whether it be shorter or longer, I think we ought to use it, to do our best in it with might and main, in order to prepare for that season of feverish activity—straining all administrative machinery to the utmost—which is sure to come upon us with a rush when the time of transition is past.

## JOHANNESBURG.—JUNE 8, 1902

[Mechanical Engineers' Banquet; in reply to the toast of 'The Land we Live in,' coupled with the name of the High Commissioner.]

I SHOULD like to reply to the toast, not of 'The Land we Live in,' which suggests a foreign country, but to the toast of 'Our Country.' It is to that toast, to which any remarks I may make hereafter, or any few remarks I may make to-night, will be directed, and when I say 'Our Country,' I hope we shall get into the habit of applying that term not merely to the late South African Republic, but to the whole of South Africa, and to that only as part of a still larger whole. I know that sounds a platitude, but though it is a platitude in speech, it is the very reverse of a truism in action. One cannot but be struck, almost every day, by the extraordinary difficulty which many men, who would, I am sure, cordially echo the sentiment which I have just been expressing, seem to feel in carrying that out in practice. I foresee that this is one of the points about which a real effort has got to be made in the future. We should always try to develop the wider patriotism, devotion to South Africa as a whole and as a part of a world-wide Empire.

## JOHANNESBURG.—JUNE 17, 1902

[In proposing the health of Lord Kitchener at a Farewell Banquet given to him at Johannesburg after the conclusion of peace.]

MR. CARR, Lord Kitchener, and gentlemen, I seem to be rather hurrying the proceedings. My excuse is that the guest of the evening, with whose feelings in this respect I entirely sympathise, is anxious to get over the speeches and enjoy his cigar in peace. I have been instructed to state that the toast which I am about to propose is described on the toast list with a slight inaccuracy; it ought to be not simply 'General Viscount Kitchener,' but 'the Army, coupled with the name of Lord Kitchener.' I am bound

to say it seems to me to make extraordinary little difference, as I cannot quite imagine the state of mind which could at the present moment think of the British Army without thinking of Lord Kitchener. Well, however you put the toast, it is one which seems to me not to require any lengthy or elaborate eulogy. The British nation throughout the world is unanimous in its gratitude to and its admiration for the South African Field Force—that great army composed of loyal subjects of the king from all quarters of the globe, which has just brought a struggle of stupendous difficulty to a triumphant conclusion. The British nation throughout the world is unanimous in its appreciation of the courage, the cheerful endurance of hardships, the indomitable perseverance and the singular humanity of the British Army. The humblest member of that army has cause to be proud, and all the rest of us—I mean those who, however deeply interested in the war, have not been privileged to take part in it—have cause to envy the humblest soldier. There is only one more remark I would make on this point. I believe, indeed I know, that the Army was never stronger or in better fettle, that it was never a finer, a fitter, or a more formidable force than on the day when the war came to an end. Instead of growing weaker while the weary struggle dragged on, it grew stronger, as indeed the British Empire has not been weakened but strengthened by the conflict. That, gentlemen, is a thing which the nation and the army may be proud of, but it is also a tribute, and perhaps the greatest of all tributes, to the Commander-in-Chief. I believe that Lord Kitchener will always look back with profound satisfaction upon the splendid fighting machine which he wielded with such effect during the latest stages of the war, and the efficiency of which is largely his own work. To say that is no disparagement of that other Great Commander, who first turned the tide of fortune in our favour, and bore the British flag in triumph from the Modder River to Pretoria, and who has won a permanent place in our affections, by a chivalry and a courtesy not less remarkable in

their kind than his great military gifts. Lord Kitchener has had a different, but not a less honourable and even more arduous task. We who live in South Africa, who know the nature of the country and the quality of our former enemies—whom we are glad to welcome to-day as our fellow-citizens, and ready to receive as our friends—we, I say, who know all these things intimately, can realise the stupendous difficulties of Lord Kitchener's task. Only a will of steel, only an untiring energy grappling day by day with a mass of complicated details, such as have seldom been crowded into any human brain, only indomitable persistence and stoical courage, could have brought him through it all to his present complete success. I know that it is commonly supposed that men of this temper are not so sensitive as their weaker fellows to those slings and arrows of outrageous fortune by which Lord Kitchener has been persistently assailed, and that they can bear more because they feel less; but, if I know Lord Kitchener at all, that is not his case. I do not believe that there is any man who has been more sensitive to any reverse that has befallen British arms, or who has felt more keenly or with more personal pain the loss of many gallant officers and men than he has done. All the more honour to him that he has never let the acuteness of these sorrows and disappointments deflect him for a moment from the steady, unwavering pursuit of his aim. It has been a tremendous strain, almost beyond human endurance, but on the other side there is also a great reward. I do not refer now to those external honours and felicitations to which, I believe, he is more indifferent than most men. I refer to the consciousness of a great task thoroughly completed—a perfect piece of workmanship—to the knowledge that he possesses in the fullest measure the respect and the confidence of all his fellow-countrymen, that his name will go down in history as that of one of the foremost of our men of action, and last but not least, that he leaves the scene of his greatest achievements esteemed, almost beloved, by the men whom he fought and conquered.

## JOHANNESBURG.—June 25, 1902

[From a speech in reply to the toast of his health as guest of the evening at the Transvaal Germans' *Fest-Kommers.*]

One at least of the objects of a meeting of this kind is to promote feelings of friendship between the British and the Germans in South Africa. Now, Mr. President, I think it would be idle to ignore that there has been a time when those good feelings were somewhat disturbed by political occurrences in this country. The last thing that any of us would desire would be to discuss the rights and wrongs of the past. We are beginning a new era, and we desire to put the past behind us. I may say, speaking for my own countrymen, that I do not think any of us who are sensible men ever resented the fact that, on the political question between England and the late South African Republics, German opinion was divided, or that German opinion was against us. There are many reasons for that difference. I need not go into them. For one reason, the Germans in this country were received here with extraordinary hospitality, and, being always well treated, had naturally every ground to sympathise with the State whose hospitality they enjoyed. None of us could blame them for that. It is true that Englishmen have felt hurt—I, as an Englishman, have shared the feeling—not at the political opposition or want of sympathy of the majority of Germans with regard to the South African question, but at the somewhat extreme form which that opposition took in Germany. We were prepared to accept the fact that Germans might think that in the recent war we were in the wrong; but we were undoubtedly astonished—it would be idle to deny it—to find that not only did German opinion differ from us on the political question, but that it was extraordinarily prone to attribute to us the worst of motives, and to credit the English Government, its representatives, and the English army with vices and crimes, of which we certainly thought we had given little justification for suspect-

ing us. Now I am certain that that feeling was a natural one on our part, but I am also certain that the misrepresentations, which led to the false conception of us, were not due in any way to the Germans in this country. However they might differ from us on the political question, and however they might sympathise with our enemies, yet they knew their British acquaintances here too well, to suspect the nation to which they belonged of the moral defects and barbarities which were attributed to it. The political question, therefore, is, I believe, the only thing which has divided the German residents in this country from the British residents—the political question pure and simple. But the political question pure and simple is now dead and buried. It has ended with the war and with the articles of peace. There is no longer any political question which need divide the Germans here resident from the British, and, that being the case, I welcome this opportunity of assuring our German friends that with the disappearance of that ground of difference, so far as I am concerned, and, I feel convinced, so far as the vast majority of the British in this country are concerned, enmity is at an end, and that we not only desire to welcome the Germans in this country, but we look forward to the cordial co-operation of the German community here, towards the development and the progress of the land we live in. You, sir, have said that the Germans are law-abiding people in every country in which they dwell. It is perfectly true, but I desire to anticipate a great deal more than mere law-abidingness on the part of the Germans in this country. I take that for granted. I desire something more—and that is cordial co-operation and sympathy. I do not wish this to be a mere formal relation ; I do not wish it to be a mere legal obedience ; I desire that the union between the Germans and the British in this country may be a union of hearts, and I desire that in the future there may be, as there has been in the past, if not in the immediate past, such a union between the two nations throughout the world.

## JOHANNESBURG.—July 29, 1902

### *The Church in South Africa*

[In reply to a vote of thanks for presiding at a meeting held at Johannesburg on this date, towards the better organisation and greater missionary activity of the Church of England in South Africa.]

I put the highest value on organisation. I think as a nation we attach far too little value to it. Mr. Furse[1] has said very truly that the British Empire has tumbled up. At this moment of general rejoicing and triumph, at this moment when our power as a nation throughout the world stands higher, or appears perhaps to stand higher, than ever it has done before, I feel that, unless the future of the Empire shows a more perfect organisation than the past, it may be that it will tumble down. Therefore, I am the last man to undervalue organisation, and I appreciate all that has been said about the necessity of a more perfect Imperial organisation, to watch over the Church or the Empire. But for all that, there is one thing which no amount of organisation can enable us to dispense with, and that is live men. Now the impression which has been made upon me to-night by the speakers we have come here to listen to—when I heard them they said a great deal that I agree with, and perhaps now and then something that I disagreed with—the impression made upon me throughout is that I have been listening to men of conviction, men of vitality. Though we have men in the Church of England in South Africa of that quality we want more, and whatever there may be in organisation—in fact the greatest boon which I expect from a more perfect organisation is to give us a greater supply of these men, listening to whom we can feel that we are in the presence of people who really care for and believe in the cause they are urging, and who bring it before us in a natural, simple, and, if I

[1] The Rev. Michael Furse, presently Archdeacon of Johannesburg, now Bishop of Pretoria.

may say so, unprofessional way. I believe these are the men who are wanted everywhere to work in the Church, and I feel most strongly they are essentially the men who are wanted to produce an effect upon the minds and the hearts of the people of a vigorous young community like this. I hope a great deal from the mission which is to be sent out here, and I trust the gentlemen to whom we have listened to-night, who are going back to give churchmen in England some idea of what is wanted in that mission, will take back this message, and impress above all things upon the people at home the class of man that is required to produce an effect out here. Now, there is a great deal that I might deal with, in the interesting speeches which we have listened to to-night; but there is one thing which Mr. Maude said, to which I should like particularly to refer, and that was the generous and friendly tone in which he spoke of the other Churches, the other Christian Churches in this country, and the way in which he appreciated their cordial sympathy with the work which he and his colleagues are undertaking. Now, I was born a churchman and bred a churchman, and though I may be a very poor churchman in some ways, my sympathies—my strong sympathies—have always been with the Church in which I was born and bred, and I have every desire, a most sincere desire, to do what little lies in my power to prove that I am in a broad sense a good churchman. With all that, I have often been pained by the attitude, by a certain attitude of superiority which the Church of England has taken towards other Christian Churches. There is nothing I detest more, there is nothing I think more out of place than any feeling of that kind between bodies which are all trying, or which ought to be trying, to do the same work, and which ought to see that, if there were a hundred workers where there are ten, the ground of their endeavour could not possibly be covered. If that sort of thing is out of place at home, it is totally and hopelessly out of place in the Colonies; and I am delighted to find, from the tone of the speeches delivered here to-night, that we need not fear lest the effort—I hope

a great and striking effort—which the Church of England is going to make in this country, will be marred by any sort of intolerance of that description. I think I can tell the gentlemen who have addressed us to-night, and who will perhaps believe what, in a very halting fashion, I have said, that they really have very sincere sympathisers in this country who desire cordially to help them. I should like to say to them that if they, and those who are coming from home, come to us in this spirit, in a spirit of simple manliness not untouched by humour, and in a spirit of tolerance towards their fellow-workers, they will find an amount of sympathy and support in this community of which they, even in their most hopeful moments, have a very inadequate idea. I believe that it is possible to lift—most enormously to lift—the position and the work of the Church in this community, if we can only get the right men to lead the way. I can assure them that if, in their desire to produce a more efficient organisation of the Church here and elsewhere, they can put an end to our ridiculous jealousies and our frittered efforts, they will have my entire sympathy. Indeed they will have the sympathy of us all in pushing their great mission in the spirit which has been exhibited in their speeches to-night.

## JOHANNESBURG.—May 28, 1904

### *The Navy and the Empire*

[In the course of acknowledging a vote of thanks for having presided at a Navy League Meeting, addressed by Mr. H. F. Wyatt, travelling delegate of the League.]

I SHOULD like to say something myself on this question, but I am deterred by two considerations. The first is that it is a question of such profound moment that I hesitate to speak about it at all—though it is the sort of question one thinks of always—without having an opportunity of picking my words. And the other reason is this. I feel that Mr. Wyatt, to whose lucid and eloquent explanation

of his case we are much indebted, does not want to hear the views of a man like myself, coming from home, whose habitual residence is in England, but that what he cares about is an expression of opinion from the people whose lives are cast altogether here. Of course, every Englishman is deeply interested in the welfare of the Navy ; the Colonies also are as deeply interested in that welfare. The whole question is : Do they feel, will they come to feel, that interest as intensely ? For my own part I believe they will. I think that here people already—a vast majority of them at any rate—do feel very strongly on the subject ; and that the speeches of this afternoon are true examples of the opinion of Johannesburg. For my own part, if I might be allowed very briefly to express the convictions which I have on this subject, I should like to take my stand on the same platform with Sir George Farrar. I echo everything he has said, not only because of the appreciation he shows of the vast importance of the Navy to us all, and of the duty of all of us towards it, but because he sees, in the contributions of the Colonies to the Navy, something greater still, and that is the federation of the Empire. He says that he hopes that this colony will some day contribute. A motion has been passed advocating a contribution by the Government of the Transvaal. What I understand by that is that the Government of the self-governing colony of the future should contribute, because of course it would not occur to a Crown Colony Government—being, as it were, representative of the Home Government—to do any such thing. I sincerely hope that when the time comes, though I shall not be here then, you will come forward with a contribution,—a large contribution, but also with the demand to have a voice in controlling the Navy, as well as contributing money for its support. And that not for your own sake, but for the sake of all of us, for the sake of the whole, great, scattered, disorganised British race—that great race which is possessed of so strong a desire for unity and co-operation, and yet has hitherto been so far from finding the proper means,

the proper organisation, to give practical effect to this desire.

Ladies and gentlemen, let us realise the fact that mere scattered, paltry contributions — and even those contributions which are not paltry—if they only mean handing over a certain sum of money, will not do all we wish to do. We want not only that in money all parts of the Empire should contribute to the Navy, but that the Navy we contribute to should be absolutely as much the Navy of South Africa, as much the Navy of Australia, as much the Navy of Canada, as it is the Navy of Great Britain. Forgive me if I have dwelt upon this subject with perhaps excessive warmth, and at perhaps excessive length, but I am an Imperialist out-and-out—and by an Imperialist I don't mean that which is commonly supposed to be indicated by the word. It is not the domination of Great Britain over the other parts of the Empire that is in my mind when I call myself an Imperialist out-and-out. I am an Englishman, but I am an Imperialist more than an Englishman, and I am prepared to see the Federal Council of the Empire sitting in Ottawa, in Sydney, in South Africa —sitting anywhere within the Empire—if in the great future we can only all hold together. That may be looking very far ahead, but it is the only right ideal in this matter. Nothing else is really of any use at all, and therefore it is not only because of the immediate value of the Navy, not only because of its great achievements and traditions, which we can never think of without a glow of pride, but because it is a political instrument, to bring about, if anything can, the effective, live, organic union of all the scattered members of our race, that I am an enthusiast for the Navy. And, if I were ten times busier than I am —and I am indeed as busy as possible—I should still have esteemed it my duty to come here and do what little I can to support a cause to which I am so entirely, and have been all my life so whole-heartedly, devoted.

## PRETORIA.—March 22, 1905

[The following speeches are the last which were delivered in South Africa by Lord Milner. Early in 1905 it became clear to himself—as it had been plain at an earlier date to his physician—that the strain of a fifteen hours' working-day involved in the immense task of reconstruction in the Transvaal and Orange River colonies, could not be longer endured by the High Commissioner without the most serious consequences to his health. He had clung to his work in South Africa just as long as he was able, and at some personal sacrifice. In the autumn of 1903, during his visit to England, he had been pressed to succeed Mr. Chamberlain as Colonial Secretary in the Unionist Cabinet, and had declined because of the stronger claim of South Africa on his strength and services. But in the beginning of 1905 he felt that, in his own words, the state of the weather was not such that it need endanger the ship to change its commander.

His farewell speeches were delivered at Germiston on March 15, at Pretoria on March 22, and at Johannesburg on March 31. The first is omitted as being mainly appropriate to the mining audience to which it was addressed, and only the last is printed here in its entirety.]

There are some things which do not grow easier by practice. One of them is to reply and to acknowledge adequately a reception such as you have just accorded me. Another is to reply without an appearance of egotism to a toast of this character. I hate speaking about myself, but I am afraid that to-night it is more or less unavoidable.

It is very painful to have to bid you good-bye. I know that that remark may sound insincere, because any one might say to me: 'If you are so sorry to go, why do you refuse to stay? Are you not going of your own motion?' Well, the exact truth is, however inconsistent it may appear, that I am going on my own initiative, and yet that I am going with deep regret. And the explanation is that I have, during the last year or two, had repeated warnings—warnings increasingly frequent and increasingly urgent—that my physical strength—and I have never professed to be a Hercules—was not equal to carrying the burden of my present work for an indefinite time. Not, at least, without impaired efficiency. Now I hold that it is a man's duty not to go on doing work which he is no longer able to do with unimpaired vigour. It is not fair

to the work, nor to those with whom he is associated. If he can no longer row his weight in the boat he ought to get out of it. He has no business to go on working until he breaks down. The break-down itself may matter only to himself; but the gradual decline in energy, in judgment, in temper, which precedes it, are a nuisance to his neighbours, and may be of fatal injury to the State.

No doubt there are two exceptions to the rule that a man is in duty bound not to go on working till he drops. The first is this: In a moment of supreme crisis, you must just stick to your job at all hazards. I have never doubted about that. I regard a man in my position as a civilian soldier of the State, and he must take a soldier's chances. And there have been such moments, several of them, during my day in South Africa. But the present time is not such a moment. Many things are anxious, many things are critical: they will be so for years. But the state of the weather is not such that you cannot change the commander without endangering the ship.

And now for my second exception. A man may feel that he ought to stick to his post, even though conscious of failing powers, if he believes that he cannot be adequately replaced. But that again, is not the case here. Great Britain is not so poor in men that she cannot find another High Commissioner for South Africa. As a matter of fact, as you see, she has found one: [1] a man of the highest character, of proved ability, a man who has already served his sovereign with conspicuous success in one of the highest offices of the State at home, and who, I venture to say, when you come to know him, will be both respected and beloved throughout this country. If there is one thing more than another which could soften for me the blow of having to give up work into which I have put my whole heart and soul, it is the absolute confidence with which I hand it over to so competent a successor.

. . . . . .

[1] Lord Selborne, who had just been appointed to succeed Lord Milner as High Commissioner.

Now, if I am right in thinking that Pretoria is for good and all the administrative centre of the Transvaal, a few words about the administration of this colony may not be out of place here this evening. That administration, I have no hesitation in saying, deserves your confidence. More than that, I believe it enjoys in a great and growing measure the confidence of the public—at any rate, of that portion of the public who think for themselves. But certainly no stranger coming into the colony and ignorant of the conditions, if he formed his judgment of the administration from the tone in which it is the fashion to speak about it, or to write about it, could possibly come to any such conclusion. That, gentlemen, I think is a pity. Serious injury, in my opinion, is done to the best interests of the Transvaal by this trick—and very often it is nothing more than a trick—of perpetual fault-finding, this steady drip, drip of depreciation, only diversified by occasional outbursts of hysterical abuse. I perfectly understand, and I am not now referring to, the abuse of people who attack the present Government merely because they hate all that it represents. That is simply political business—disagreeable perhaps, but natural and to be expected. But I should have thought that the mere fact that the present Government was inevitably a target for the attacks of this section would have induced a little more moderation in the strictures of those who are, or at least ought to be, its friends.

And there is another thing to be thought of. Is this really the way to improve matters? He is a bad master who is always finding fault with his servants, and he ends by being, not better, but worse served. And what, after all, are these much-abused officials but the servants of the community? People are not exactly tumbling over one another just now to enter the Public Service of the Transvaal—at least, not the sort of people who will be any credit to it. And no wonder. Might not a little more generosity of judgment be useful in retaining and in obtaining the stamp of men we require?

Now, when I say this, do not let any one suppose that I have the slightest personal grievance in the matter. On the contrary, setting one thing against another, it has been my fortune in life to get, on the balance, quite as much eulogy as is good for any man, and no doubt more than I deserve. Indeed, this carping at the administration to which I refer is quite frequently accompanied by apologies, and even compliments to myself. It is not my fault that everything is wrong, but the fault of my subordinates. Now that is a position which I absolutely refuse to accept. For the general policy, at any rate, I am in the main responsible, while as to its execution I say with perfect sincerity that I have been most loyally and most ably served. I merit no commendation, and I desire none, to the exclusion, much less at the expense of, my fellow-workers. Before the tribunal of posterity, as in the struggles of to-day, we will stand or fall together.

And I for one have no fear whatever of the verdict which any impartial chronicler will pronounce on our work as a whole. Mistakes have been made—no doubt, not a few. I myself could point out more mistakes than any of the cavillers. But it has been truly said that the man who never made a mistake never made anything, and we have made a great deal. What strikes me about the band of workers, of whom I have had the inestimable privilege of being the chief, as I look back on the years of restless constructive activity since the restoration of peace, is the enormous mass of their achievement, and considering the fearful pressure under which it had to be done, the general solidity of the work. It is rough work, no doubt, a great deal of it. There has been no time for trimming or polishing. But if rough and showing many traces of haste, it is solid and bears few signs of scamping. Much of it has been costly work, but then one has always to pay extra for extra pace, and we have been going full steam ahead the whole time. The one thing essential, the one thing imperative, when we took over this country, a total wreck, with half its population in exile, with no administrative machinery

whatever, and, so far as the plant of government was concerned, with the scantiest equipment of any civilised country in the world, was to make it a going concern again as soon as possible.

We could not stand fiddling over small economies while people starved. We could not pause to think out the precise form and size of our future permanent establishments. We had to re-start everything at once—to get the indispensable material at any price, to employ as many hands as were necessary at the time and the best we could get—there was no possibility of elaborate selection—and to leave the drilling, the grading, the weeding out, for a period of greater leisure. I say the work has been rough, and the work has been costly. But after all the great feature of it, the fact that will stand out in history, and which has in our day at any rate no parallel, is the colossal amount which has been done in the time. It is just because it is so enormous in extent that it presents so many points to criticism.

If I were to attempt to tell you all about it, I should keep you here all night. It is not a matter of half an hour this, not of an after-dinner speech, or of any speech, but of a volume or volumes. But what help, I may ask, what encouragement, what instruction, have we had in our herculean task from the people, who know our business so much better than we do, including some who were asked to assist us and would not? And here let me just say one word—though it may be a digression—one word of thanks and acknowledgment to those members of the public who, whether they have criticised the work of the Government or not, have at any rate done something more than criticise and have lent a powerful hand to get things right. I must not leave you under the impression that in speaking of my fellow-workers I was thinking only of the official class. It has been one of the characteristics of this administration, attacked as it is, among so many other things, for being autocratic in its spirit and out of sympathy with the people, that it has constantly invoked the interest and

assistance of the public. And it has been richly rewarded. For it has succeeded in obtaining an amount of assistance from outside its ranks such as no really autocratic Government has ever had—volunteer assistance of the most valuable kind, and generally from very busy men who have, nevertheless, spent their time and energy lavishly in the public service.

These men, like the merest officials, have not escaped from the general atmosphere of captiousness and cavilling. But to return to my point. What benefit have we derived from that atmosphere? Is it possible to sum up its lessons? Oh, yes. First of all, directly after the war there was a fierce demand that everything should be done at once. It was no use saying that even this rich country had not unlimited resources, that everybody was already being worked to death, that there were some things which could not be done well, or done at all, without a large amount of previous study and investigation. All these were the miserable excuses of an idle, unenterprising, unsympathetic, bureaucracy, which knew nothing about South Africa. But presently there was a slump. And, good heavens! what a slump that was, according to our great and wise and farseeing instructors. Never in the history of the world had there been anything so dreadful. Deficit was not the word for it. There were going to be at least half a dozen deficits. We were rushing helter-skelter into bankruptcy. And it was all due to the reckless extravagance of the Administration, to its rashness, to its optimism, to the bad way in which officials had been engaged, and enterprises started without previous investigation. It was no use saying that reactions of this kind had occurred before, that they were the common experience of all countries and governments, that the right thing was, while taking in sail, to keep steadily on our course. Such arguments were the devices of discredited gamblers trying to conceal the extent of their over-speculations. But, once again, times have begun to change. Things generally are not mending very fast, but they are decidedly

mending. The revenue of the State once more begins to show signs of elasticity. And so, with the return of the old conditions, up pops again the old piece. Our sins of commission are being allowed to sink into the background, and the stage is being cleared for another good sound rampage over our sins of omission. It is no longer our extravagance and our restlessness which are the subject of the burlesque; it is once again our parsimony and our sloth. Shameful indeed, and calculated to bring a blush to the face of every Briton, is the spectacle of an Administration which, in its enormously long life of two years and three-quarters, has failed to endow this vast raw country, which it took over devoid of everything, with conditions in every respect similar to those of old civilised countries which have accumulated their stock for centuries. 'And so we go round the gooseberry bush.'

It may be said that this froth is only on the surface, that the extravagant and inconsistent criticisms of a few people, who make all the noise, are far from representing the real attitude of the sober, silent majority of the community. Gentlemen, I know that; but I know, too, that, if they are simply ignored, if we are too contemptuous to take any notice of them, they will end by falsifying history as they have already created a wrong impression in the minds of hundreds of people, who are too busy to study official records. What I want is, that the great majority of quiet, steady-going people should not take their opinions ready-made, but should find a little time to examine things for themselves. They would, I think, be astonished to realise how far we have travelled in a short time.

People take many things as a matter of course, which, nevertheless, are only the result of the most constant watchfulness, of the most strenuous labour—the profound peace which reigns throughout a country so lately the scene of a devastating struggle, the Statute-book no longer an unintelligible jumble, but reduced to reasonable proportions and an orderly form, the steady, incorruptible administration of justice under a Supreme Court which has no

superior in any British colony, the return of our principal industry to its old prosperity, the new life which is being infused into agriculture—the starting of experimental farms, the introduction of high-class stock, the planting of forests —the municipal institutions, as liberal as any in the world, which have now been created throughout the whole of the colony, the free schools containing twice as many children as at any previous period, the new provisions for higher technical training, the ensuring of an adequate water supply for your greatest centre of population, the careful scientific study now for the first time being devoted to the great problem of irrigation in all its branches.

I say these things are treated as a matter of course. I do not complain of the fact. It is the highest possible compliment. But I would just ask you, as the many deficiencies of our Public Works are a favourite theme of comment, to look at some of the work which has been accomplished in that single line.

We have completed 275 miles of new railways—I am speaking now of both colonies—311 miles are in course of construction, and 488 miles are arranged for. In addition to this we have spent two and a half millions on our existing railways, which were left in a terrible condition after the war, and which are now in a better state than they ever were. Or to turn to the Transvaal only, nearly £300,000 has been spent on the renewal and improvement of telegraphs and telephones. Partly, no doubt, as a result of that expenditure, the Services under the Postmaster-General will in this year, for the first time, show a surplus. £420,000 has been spent on schools, orphanages, and teachers' quarters, including half a dozen very large town schools, between twenty and thirty town schools of average size, and no less than 152 farm schools. The lunatic asylum, which was a disgrace, is being replaced by one of exceptional excellence. Several new hospitals have been built, several existing hospitals greatly improved, and a large further sum has been allotted for hospital construction. New prisons have been built,

and existing prisons have been enlarged, though the construction of the big central prison, an urgent necessity, has proceeded slowly, mainly owing to the failure of a contractor. Immense sums have been spent on the improvement of roads in the country districts, which were never good, and at the end of the war were in a really shocking condition, more than 1300 miles of road having undergone a certain amount of repair. Twenty-two solid permanent bridges have been constructed. Add to this the innumerable minor works which are going on in every part of the country, the police barracks, the Government Offices, the magistrates' houses, and so on, and you will not be surprised that in three years we have spent on these objects £1,100,000 out of the Loan, and £1,035,000 out of revenue, while we are committed to a further expenditure of at least half a million. I know that what has been done is only a fraction of what is required, but it is no small matter in a short time, and it has taxed the energies of the available staff and the available labour to the utmost. Even if we had had more money, I do not believe that we could have done much more with the hands at our disposal.

I have gone into these matters at perhaps too great length, but this is the last occasion on which I may be able to address a Transvaal audience on purely local questions. In the one speech, which is yet before me, I may have to devote myself to matters affecting all South Africa. If I may sum up the matter in a few words, it is this: The time is near at hand when the people of this country will have to take a far greater direct share than hitherto in the control of the administration. The time is probably not far distant when they will control it altogether. When that time comes, there is nothing more important than that there should be good relations, zeal and devotion on the one hand, a reasonable amount of consideration on the other, between the Public Service and the great body of citizens who will be its masters. Keep your public servants up to the mark by all means, but remember that appreciа-

tion is just as potent in keeping people up to the mark, yes, and, in the case of the best people, even far more potent, than censure. Remember that, and I have no fear but that you will be loyally served in the future as you have been in the past, and that the good work, which has already been done, and which is admittedly only a beginning, will go on, mainly, I hope, on the same lines, but with constantly improving methods, improving as experience grows and pressure diminishes, till the colony has achieved the high place for which Nature has undoubtedly destined her among the great self-governing communities of the British Empire.

### JOHANNESBURG.—March 31, 1905

I THANK you sincerely for this cordial and most impressive welcome. It would be affectation on my part to pretend not to be touched by it, especially in view of the character of the gathering, the largest of its kind and the most representative of all parts of the country that I can ever recollect seeing during the eight years of my stay in South Africa. But, sir, as I listened to the kind and eulogistic terms in which you referred to my achievements, I experienced a feeling of singular embarrassment. It is often the case at these moments of retrospect, that while a man's friends are indulgently reviewing his performances the man himself is thinking all the time of the things he wished to do—perhaps tried to do—but did not succeed in doing. That is my case on this occasion. Browning's words about 'the petty done; the undone vast,' weigh heavily upon my soul to-night. But I have no time for more of these personal reflections.

This is my last chance of addressing, at any length, a South African audience. It is impossible to give you any idea of the number of thoughts crowding into my mind. I cannot deal with more than a very small proportion of them, and only that, if you will kindly put up with the driest and concisest of summaries unadorned by any

attempt at phrase-making or rhetorical flourishes, in which respect I am a very poor performer in any case. It is a source of great comfort to me in leaving this country to feel that, as regards its material prosperity, the outlook is so much brighter than it has been for some time. The great industry, on which the welfare of this colony, and to a large extent of all South Africa, still mainly depends, is bound, humanly speaking, to attain in the present year the highest rate of production ever yet known. That circumstance will presently make its influence felt in almost every direction. I have not the least wish to use unduly optimistic language, or to say anything which might be twisted into what is known in the slang of the market as a bull point. I have never pretended to know anything about markets. My concern is with the fundamental economic factors, which, on the average and in the long run, but only in the long run, determine the course of markets. I am not thinking of next week, or of next month, nor am I thinking of anything ephemeral, when I say that it appears to me that we are inevitably approaching, though it may not come to-morrow or next day, a fresh period of expansion and development.

I trust I am not mistaken in this respect, for so much depends upon it, so much more than mere increase of wealth. For such expansion and development, most desirable in any case, are peculiarly desirable to-day—and I am thinking more especially of the Transvaal—in view of the imminence of constitutional change. Prosperity would be invaluable to the new system in its first beginnings. For it is not the case that what is known as self-government, either in its partial or its complete form, will of itself bring every blessing in its train. If any one believes that popular elections and a party system are the panacea which is going to put right whatever is defective in your system of government, I fear he is doomed to singular disappointment. To be quite frank, my own opinion is that they will not improve your administration or your finances any more, if as much, as these would be improved

in any case by influences already at work. The new machinery, even under the present system, is getting into better order every month, men are getting more used to their work, and, as I have said, the country generally is recovering from the effects of war and from other causes which have retarded its progress. None of these good tendencies will be quickened—I trust none of them may be retarded—by the advent of party politics.

The reasons for the introduction of self-government are of a different character. The great reason is that men, quite naturally, prefer to manage their own affairs, or to think that they are managing them; and government is such an imperfect business at the best that it is, as a general rule, more important to have a system which people like, than to have a possibly better system which they like less. Moreover, if things go wrong in a self-governing colony, as they will at times go wrong anywhere, the blame does not fall on the Imperial Government or its representatives. There is no excuse for hammering poor old Downing Street. The good relations between the Mother Country and the colony are not affected, and these are really of far greater moment than any slight loss, if there should prove to be a loss, in the efficiency of your local administration.

These considerations are so plain that I am puzzled to understand why people should think that the Imperial Government needs any pushing in the matter. Obviously the interest of the Mother Country must be to grant self-government as soon and as completely as possible. Obviously the bias of every Secretary of State for the Colonies must be strongly in that direction. Just imagine the relief to him, when he is badgered about some trumpery incident at Paulpotgietersfontein, to be able to say, 'This is a matter for the responsible government of the colony.' Imagine the immense advantage to Imperial interests, even more than to those of the colony, of being able to stop the mischievous game of dragging local colonial business, for home party purposes, about the floor of the House of Commons.

And what the Minister at home is bound to feel on the subject, his advisers out here must assuredly feel just as strongly. The temptation both to him and to them is to go too fast rather than too slowly in transferring the responsibility from their own shoulders to those of the people of the colony. And if, nevertheless, they move rather less rapidly, rather more circumspectly, than some men think desirable, is it not reasonable to suppose that they have good grounds for acting in a manner so contrary to their personal interest and inclination ?

These reflections are not out of place at the present time. A new constitution is about to be given to this colony. Without pretending to know all its details, I know enough to say that it will be a very liberal constitution, and a great stride, the greatest single stride in the whole march, in the direction of complete self-government. Its provisions have not been decided upon in a hurry, or without regard to public opinion here. Ample time has been allowed for the expression and the careful consideration of the various views held on the subject in the colony itself. Of course it is not to be expected that the result will please everybody ; perhaps it will not entirely please anybody. But no one will be able to dispute the care and thoroughness with which the work has been done, or the spirit of good-will towards and trust in the people of the colony which has inspired it. That being the case, I say without hesitation that it is the duty of all good citizens to accept it heartily, and to work it with good-will.

No course could be more unwise, especially for those who may have wished that His Majesty's Government had gone even further, than to try to make the new constitution a failure, with the view of hastening the grant of something else. That might be the way to win concessions from an unwilling donor ; it is not the way to get more out of a willing one. If you want a man who has your welfare at heart to entrust you with ten talents, the way to do it is to make the best use of the five talents with which he has

already entrusted you, not to hide them away in a napkin and sulk because they are not ten to begin with.

But there are higher motives than those of mere policy from which, as it seems to me, the people of this country should meet the Home Government half way, and meet it in a generous spirit, over this business. The present advisers of the Crown, and I say this no longer as an official, which I shall so soon cease to be, but as a private citizen, have shown themselves the friends of this colony. They have not hesitated to risk defeat in the defence of unpopular measures, which they consider necessary for the restoration of your prosperity. They have refused, in spite of jibes and sneers, to use the power which they undoubtedly possess, to saddle this country with a war contribution at a time of difficulty, and have preferred to leave the question to be settled by the people of the colony themselves, and to trust entirely to their sense of honour. I say such generosity and confidence deserve recognition, and the best way you can recognise them is by making a success of the constitution, which the Imperial Government has framed for this colony, solely with an eye to what it considers to be the best and safest for the colony itself.

But some men say, ' Oh ! but unless you grant complete autonomy at once, the Boers will have nothing to do with your system. They have told you so, and, unless they come in under it, where shall we be ? ' Well, in the first place, I do not for a moment believe that they will not come in. I decline to believe that the Boers as a body are going to put themselves so completely in the wrong, as they would do, by refusing to co-operate with their British fellow-citizens on terms of perfect equality, merely because a certain stereotyped resolution has been passed at a number of meetings. And even if they did, though I should regret it, though I should feel that the progress of the country had been thereby greatly retarded, I should still not think that the end of the world had come. If one section of the people absolutely refused to play the game, unless the rules were made exactly to suit themselves,

the natural answer would seem to be, 'Very well, then, sit out. We can play without you, and you can always join in when you are tired of sitting.' To my mind it is a dangerous principle, that it is not the judgment of impartial statesmen, who have proved that they have the best interests of the colony at heart, but the demands of a Boer junta, which are to determine what is to be done.

The policy, which I would venture to commend to those who may be responsible for the government not of this colony only, but of any South African colony, is a somewhat different one. By all means continue to treat Dutch and British with absolute equality. We have done for good and all with the system of having two classes of white men in this country, a privileged and an unprivileged class. I say, treat all equally; indeed, try to forget as far as possible the differences of origin. Show the same solicitude, the same zeal, for the interests of every class, of every neighbourhood, regardless whether this or that section predominates in it. But having done that, await with patience the gradual approximation, which equality of treatment and community of interests will slowly but surely produce. You can do nothing more to hurry it.

Perhaps, while on this subject, I may say without offence that we British are apt to be rather too fussy about the attitude of the Dutch. It may be disappointing that, whatever we do, the other party, or, at least, a large number of them, still maintain an attitude of aloofness, if not of sullenness. But it is, after all, no more than might have been expected. How little are three years in the life of a people! It is a mistake to keep girding at them for not showing more friendliness than they are as yet able to feel. But it is no less a mistake to try to coax them by offering something more than they are entitled to, and something which in our hearts we know we ought not to give up. Courtesy and consideration for their feelings, always. Compromise on questions of principle, the suppression of our natural and legitimate sentiments, never. There is a

want of good sense, and, worse still, of self-respect, about that sort of kowtowing which makes it the worst way in the world to impress or to win over a strong, a shrewd, and an eminently self-respecting people.

Mutual understanding, sympathy, a common ideal, can only be the growth of years. But, in the meantime, there is much to be done in working together for the material development of the country. That is the safest meeting-ground. Politics, pure and simple, may, for a long time to come, tend rather to maintain, than to obliterate, racial differences. But the extension of railways, the development of agriculture, irrigation, and works of public improvement generally, are all so many bonds of union. And there is so much to be done to make this country, favoured as it is in many respects by nature, a fitting home for civilised men, to make it yield them anything like what it is capable of, either in wealth or attractiveness or comfort.

This is a text on which I have preached so often that I will not weary you with a fresh homily to-night. All I will say to you is this: If you recognise, as you all must, the immense extent of your requirements, be very careful to guard against insidious attacks upon the means of satisfying them. In other words, do not throw away Revenue. It is quite likely that the next few years will be years of surpluses. But no sooner does Revenue raise its head than there is a scream for the remission of taxation. Gentlemen, there is a great deal too much that you urgently need to provide out of public money, alike in town and country, for you to be in a hurry to give away that money. We have had to work hard enough in all conscience to make both ends meet, and if they a little more than meet, there is plenty to do with the balance.

Take, for example, this clamour for the reduction of railway rates. No doubt in certain instances the case for immediate reduction is strong. But you should think twice before agreeing to an all-round reduction on imported articles. You will be told that this is the way to reduce the cost of living. I have said before, and I repeat it,

that you can do a great deal more, in the first instance, to reduce the cost of living by completing your railway system, and bringing naturally rich districts, which are at present wastes from lack of communication, into touch with the centre, than you will ever do by any reduction of rates that it is at present possible to make. It is not as if you could, under existing conditions, make a reduction which would bring down rates from being high to being low or even moderate. High they are, and high they will continue for some time to come, mainly for reasons over which no government has any control. What you can do is to throw away, say, half a million a year in making reductions of rates, which will all go into a few pockets, and which the general public will not feel at all, while that half million, wisely applied, would facilitate a great increase of supplies and expansion of business, all tending to induce a state of things in which a really substantial reduction of rates will be possible later on.

It is the same story in other cases. Among the things which will clearly have to be fought for is that share in the known mineral wealth of the country, which belongs, not to private individuals, but to the State. I am not now speaking of new discoveries. Every wise man must favour the most liberal recompense to the bona fide discoverer. I am speaking of the distribution of the Government's share in mineral wealth already discovered and delimited. Here again the so-called popular cause, which is really anti-popular, because it is dead against the interests of nineteen out of twenty men, women, and children in the country, might easily win the popular ear. Why, so runs the argument, not give the poor man a chance? Why should the Government get all this money instead of its going to the people? But what are the Government in this matter but the trustees of the people? And how would the people get the money if it were just left to be scrambled for? A few lucky individuals would get it. But the people as a whole would lose it. Yet it is they who urgently want it to supply themselves with the hundred

and one things which a civilised country ought to have, but which this country has not got.

This subject of development is one about which I could run on for hours. I shall live in the memories of men in this country, if I live at all, in connection with the struggle to keep it within the limits of the British Empire. And certainly I engaged in that struggle with all my might, being, from head to foot, one mass of glowing conviction of the rightness of our cause. But, however inevitable, however just, a destructive conflict of that kind is a sad business to look back upon. What I should prefer to be remembered by is the tremendous effort subsequent to the war, not only to repair its ravages, but to restart these colonies on a higher plane of civilisation than they had ever previously attained. To that task I have devoted myself with at least equal energy, and certainly with far more sympathy with my work.

And in that connection I should like to say one final word to those—perhaps they are not very many—who are good enough to place confidence in me; I do not mean merely confidence in my good intentions, or in the main drift of my policy, but in the general soundness of my judgment. To them I would say: 'If you believe in me, defend my works when I am gone. Defend, more especially, those which are more especially mine. I care for that much more than I do for eulogy, or, indeed, for any personal reward.'

Many of the things which I have been instrumental in starting since the war must have been started equally by any man in my position. I may have laid the foundations more or less well, pushed on the building more or less energetically. But any other man would have had to do these things, and once done, being both necessary and fashioned after a common pattern, they are now generally accepted and perfectly safe from subsequent attack. But there are other enterprises which owe their origin mainly to my personal initiative and insistence. And these are all more or less in danger. They were necessarily unpopular

to begin with, just because they were original. As people always begin by disliking a new fashion, so do they always begin by disliking new institutions, or a new policy, something they are not used to, something for which there is no precedent. As has been truly said, there is no pain like the pain of a new idea. And being thus unpopular to begin with, they have not had time enough to wear down unpopularity by their fruits, because they are slow-growing. They are all under the curse of that congenital vice of their author, an incurable tendency to look far ahead.

Take, for instance, the policy of Land Settlement. It is, I have always contended, and still contend, a vital and essential part of our constructive work. It was not adopted, as some critics have said, with a view of ousting the old country population or out-numbering them—I never had such a crazy idea—but rather of quickening that population with a new leaven, of strengthening the progressive element among the farmers, which greatly needs strengthening, and of forming a link between town and country and between British and Dutch. And all this the much-abused experiment is actually doing to-day, though certainly not to the extent which I should wish. But that is due to the inherent difficulty of the enterprise (and I never had any illusion that it was easy), to the fact that we were hustled into starting it before we were ready, and to a rather exceptional amount of bad luck in the early stages. But all that is over now. The work is progressing in both the new colonies, slowly, unsensationally, but in a very sound fashion. The only thing needed is just to go on with it, and, instead of perpetually raking up, magnifying, and gloating over the mistakes of the first beginnings, to make up as much leeway as possible now that those mistakes have been rectified. But the experiment has plenty of enemies, and, unless I can enlist for it some active friends, I foresee that it will have a troubled future.

Or take, again, afforestation. That is another of Milner's fads. I am as sure as I stand here that Nature intended wide tracts of South Africa to be forest country. If you

were to spend £100,000 a year in the two colonies for the next thirty or forty years in planting forests, you would find yourselves, at the end of that time, in possession of an undreamed of source of wealth, which would come in very handy as your mines were exhausted, especially as, unlike the mines, it would itself be inexhaustible. Yet last year the Legislative Council of the Transvaal cut down the paltry vote which was proposed for afforestation, and it is, humanly speaking, certain that, unless people can be awakened to their vital permanent interests, the first responsible Ministry which has a difficulty in squaring the Budget will starve the whole thing to death. And a similar danger threatens our arrangements for the scientific promotion of agriculture, using that word to cover all production from the land, whether stock or crops, and the scientific study of irrigation. The work of experts in both these branches will take years to make itself fully felt. It is much of it negative work, in checking disease, in preventing the waste arising from ill-digested schemes, in eliminating quackery. The positive results will be slow, and yet, if the policy is persisted in, they will be enormous. But without more public support, I will not answer for its fate at the hands of politicians.

Last, but not least, there is the amalgamation of the railways of the two colonies, and that object of so much ill-considered criticism, the Inter-Colonial Council. I have actually seen it described as a cloak for extravagance. Yet it is absolutely demonstrable that it has contributed greatly to both efficiency and economy in the services under its control. I venture to assert that those services have been better and more closely looked after by a body specially constituted for that purpose than they would have been if they had been left to take their chance in the miscellaneous mass of work with which the two legislatures are already fully, and more than fully, occupied.

It is rather the fashion to decry the South African Constabulary, especially among people who know least about it. In the country districts, where the work of the con-

stabulary lies, I am in the habit of hearing a very different tale. The truth, I believe, is that the South African Constabulary, which, like anything else, did not spring into life in a state of complete perfection, has now become one of the most efficient forces of its kind in the British Empire, and one which discharges without fuss an immense amount of useful work. And, as a defensive force, it suffers from its own efficiency. So complete has been its success in preventing trouble that people, who do not know what I know, have quite forgotten the ever-present sources of possible trouble in a country peopled as this is.

But after all the most important, and probably the most permanent, of the duties of the Council is the control of the railways, and in that respect its record is a brilliant one. It was not the fault of the Council that the railways were in such a terrible state after the war, but it is directly due to the influence of the Council and to the hard work of the Railway Committee, which is its organ, that the efficiency of the railways has been restored, their equipment immensely augmented, the accounts reformed, and their revenue greatly increased by the reduction of working expenditure. If the Council were to come to an end to-morrow it would have fully justified its existence.

But it will not come to an end yet awhile, for it is as important as ever that the railways of the two colonies should be worked as one system, with an eye to their efficiency as a whole, and to the greatest good of the greatest number on both sides of the Vaal, not as two competitive systems, developed wastefully, because independently, antagonistically, and for ever fighting with one another over division of traffic and division of rates. We are never, I hope, going backward to separate ownership of the railways of the two colonies. Indeed, I am comforted to think that it is a practical impossibility. Much rather should our eyes be turned in the exactly opposite direction, to the amalgamation, which might even precede political union, of all the railways of South Africa, and to placing them under a permanent Commission, representa-

tive of the several states, but outside political influences, which would work them on business lines, and put an end to the present chaos of rates and the clash of interests between one railway system and another. That, I am convinced, would be the greatest practical boon to the whole sub-continent. When that day comes the Inter-Colonial Council will have done its work.

And now, at the risk of wearying you to death, there are just two more subjects which I must refer to, subjects both of the deepest importance, but of a quite impersonal character. The first of these is the Native Question, or, rather, I should say, the Colour Question. You know I am, in the opinion of the vast majority of men in this room, a heretic about that, and I am an impenitent heretic. I believe as strongly as ever that we got off the right lines when we threw over Mr. Rhodes's principle of 'equal rights for every civilised man.' At the same time, I am prepared to rely, for a return to what I believe to be the true path, upon a gradual change in opinion in this country itself. It is a South African question, and nothing could be worse in principle or more unfortunate in its results, than to attempt to influence the solution of it, even in a right direction, by external pressure.

I hate referring to a question of this magnitude in a sentence or two at the end of a long speech. It is so very unworthy a treatment of it. But the alternative was worse, namely, that I should appear to forget its importance, which must ever be present to us, or to be afraid to stick to an unpopular opinion.

And here let me say that, whatever may be my anxieties about the Native Question, I feel that a great contribution has been made to a better understanding of it by the Report and evidence of the Native Affairs Commission. Their value will be more and more appreciated as time goes on. There are far too many people who think that they can dispose of the Native Question by a few slap-dash phrases, or by a contemptuous reference to that long extinct bogey, Exeter Hall. To these I would say, read that Report and

that evidence, and you will see how much more complicated the whole subject is than you imagine, how much more many-sided and, at the same time, how much less uniformly dark. Above all you may learn that the essence of wisdom in dealing with it is discrimination—not to throw all coloured people, from the highest to the lowest, into one indiscriminate heap, but to study closely the differences of race, of circumstances, of degrees of civilisation, and to adapt your policy intelligently and sympathetically to the several requirements of each.

And with that, gentlemen, I have arrived at the absolutely last point of my appalling list. And this I care most about of all, because it is over all and embracing all. What I pray for hardest is that those in South Africa with whom my words may carry weight should remain faithful, faithful above all in times of reaction, to the great idea of Imperial unity. The goal of all our hopes, the solution of all our difficulties, is there. Shall we ever see the fulfilment of that idea? Whether we do or not, whether we succeed or fail, I for one shall always be steadfast in that faith, though I should prefer to work quietly and in the background, in the formation of opinion, rather than in the exercise of power.

This question, as I see it—the future of the British Empire—is a race, a close race, between the numerous influences so manifestly making for disruption, and the growth of a great, but still very imperfectly realised, political conception. Shall we ever get ourselves understood in time? The word Empire, the word Imperial, are, in some respects, unfortunate. They suggest domination, ascendancy, the rule of a superior state over vassal states. But as they are the only words available, all we can do is to make the best of them, and to raise them in the scale of language by a new significance. When we, who call ourselves Imperialists, talk of the British Empire, we think of a group of states, independent of one another in their local affairs, but bound together for the defence of their common interests, and the development of a common

civilisation, and so bound, not in an alliance—for alliances can be made and unmade, and are never more than nominally lasting,—but in a permanent organic union. Of such a union, we fully admit, the dominions of our sovereign, as they exist to-day, are only the raw material. Our ideal is still distant, but we are firmly convinced that it is not visionary nor unattainable.

And see how such a consummation would solve, and, indeed, can alone solve, the most difficult and most persistent of the problems of South Africa, how it would unite its white races as nothing else can. The Dutch can never own a perfect allegiance merely to Great Britain. The British can never, without moral injury, accept allegiance to any body-politic which excludes their motherland. But British and Dutch alike could, without loss of dignity, without any sacrifice of their several traditions, unite in loyal devotion to an Empire-State, in which Great Britain and South Africa would be partners, and could work cordially together for the good of South Africa as a member of that greater whole. And so you see the true Imperialist is also the best South African. The road is long, the obstacles are many. The goal may not be reached in my lifetime, perhaps not in that of the youngest man in this room. You cannot hasten the slow growth of a great idea of that kind by any forcing process. But you can keep it steadily in view, lose no opportunity of working for it, resist, like grim death, any policy which draws you away from it. I know that to be faithful in this service requires the rarest of combinations, that of ceaseless effort with infinite patience. But then think of the greatness of the reward—the high privilege of having in any way contributed to the fulfilment of one of the noblest conceptions which have ever dawned on the political imagination of mankind.

## LONDON, QUEEN'S HALL, LANGHAM PLACE.— JANUARY 9, 1906

### *Persecution of the Jews in Russia*

[The following passage is taken from a speech delivered at a meeting 'representative of every religious creed and political complexion,' called to protest against the ill-treatment of the Jews in Russia]:—

MEMBERS of all parties and creeds in England are agreed on the merits of this question. The only objection which could be urged to the resolution is, that in the fellowship of European nations it is not desirable for the people of one country to give advice to the people of another about their internal affairs. It may be said that we in England are a little prone to preach to our neighbours: we have sometimes done so in cases where our own record was none too clean. Certainly we ought to be sure of our ground and our facts, and that our own action, in all similar circumstances, has been such as to give our protest the greatest possible moral weight. All these conditions I think exist in an exceptional degree in the present case. There can be no doubt that the recurring outbursts of savagery against the unfortunate Jews of Russia constitute an enormous scandal against which all civilisation, and especially all Christian peoples, have a right to raise their voices, because scandals disgrace and injure all alike. These outrages are only the acute phases of a chronic malady. The denial to the Jews in Russia of the ordinary rights of citizenship, the policy which treats them at all times as an inferior race, and compels them, even when they have wholly different desires, to regard the State as a tyrant and an oppressor, leads to a state of things which no well-ordered and well-governed country can contemplate with equanimity, nor from which it can hope for any success in its administration. Great Britain treats the Jews in the right spirit, as men and as future citizens. They are so treated in the South African colonies, and the result is that the Jewish population is second to none under the British flag in its zeal, its patriotism, and its practical contribution to the general well-being of the community.

## HOUSE OF LORDS.—February 26, 1906

### *The Transvaal and Orange River Colonies*

[In January 1906 the Unionist Government had been replaced by a Liberal Government under Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, which had an immense majority in the House of Commons. As this result was due in a great measure to popular misapprehensions, skilfully fostered, as to the effect of the Chinese Labour Ordinance in the Transvaal, it was generally supposed that the Government would reverse the South African policy of their predecessors. This impression, which proved to be correct, was presently confirmed by a paragraph in the King's Speech announcing the immediate grant of full responsible government to the Orange River Colony. At the same time it became known that a similar measure was contemplated for the Transvaal, and that the so-called Lyttelton Constitution, which had been introduced by the Unionist Government as a transitional system paving the way to complete self-government, was to be at once swept away.

In these circumstances—see Hansard—Lord Milner 'rose to call attention to the situation in South Africa, and to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he could give the House any information as to the form of the proposed Constitutions of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State.']

My Lords, I feel that I stand in special need of that indulgence which your Lordships are always ready to accord to one who addresses you for the first time. I can honestly say that it is only with the greatest reluctance and from a strong sense of public duty that I am bringing up this matter at all to-day.

At first sight the moment may not appear opportune. The noble Earl the Secretary of State may say: 'We have told you that we are giving this matter our most careful consideration, and that we find it a very difficult and complicated one. The Prime Minister stated only last Monday that he was woefully in want of information; the noble Marquess the Leader of this House stated on the same day that we were obliged to make further inquiry on a variety of subjects: under these circumstances, how can you expect us, after only a week, to give you full particulars?' I admit the force of that, and I may say that

the last thing I wish to do in this matter is to hurry the noble Earl or the Government. The more complete their knowledge the better. But without going into every detail I think the noble Earl may be glad of an opportunity of making some statement on the general trend of the Government's policy, especially on points which have not attracted so much attention as Chinese labour.

I see it assumed in some quarters friendly to the Government, that their guiding principle is simply to reverse everything done by their predecessors. If that is the case, I think that the country, which has certainly never given its approval to such a proceeding, is entitled to know what is contemplated before it is too late. I hardly think myself that that can be their intention. Still, there are certain disquieting symptoms—witness the whoop of triumph with which the Speech from the Throne and the commentaries of Ministers upon it have been received by the whole anti-British Press of South Africa, and by the agitators who since the conclusion of peace have never ceased to discredit and obstruct all the efforts of His Majesty's servants in that country, even when they were of the most direct benefit to the mass of the Boer people.

That insidious and absolutely consistent enemy of this country, *Ons Land*, breaks into a pæan because the Lyttelton-Milner *régime* is as 'dead as a door nail.' *Ons Land* is really almost as happy, and, of course, more demonstrative than on the occasion of our military disasters at the beginning of the war. I say these are disquieting symptoms. I hope the noble Earl will be able to dispel our alarm—the alarm of those who did not sympathise with the enemy during the war, and do not want to see all the hard and costly work accomplished since its conclusion mutilated or undone.

I should like to point out to your Lordships some of the principal points with respect to which we are in suspense, and very anxious suspense. First of all, there was a passage in His Majesty's Speech, which seems to me to have received much less attention than it deserved. I

refer to the brief paragraph which announced the immediate grant of full responsible government to the Orange River Colony. The noble Marquess the Leader of this House seemed to treat that as a matter of course. He even said that he had never been quite able to understand why the late Government did not deal with the Orange River Colony in the same way as with the Transvaal. I cannot say what reasons weighed with the late Government; but to me it seems tolerably obvious that, if you are tempted to make the same risky experiment in two places, you naturally try it first in the place where the risk is less, and not in that where it is immeasurably greater.

I trust the Government are under no illusions as to the extent of the risk in the Orange River Colony. What, after all, do we mean when we talk of giving responsible government to a colony? It means giving it, virtually, complete independence under the Crown. There remains, no doubt, the Governor's veto on legislation, a veto very rarely exercised, very invidious in its exercise, but still, as far as it goes, a certain power; but in executive matters all authority lies in the hands of the Colonial Ministry. I think it was the late Lord Salisbury who once pithily described the situation by saying that the only bond between the Mother Country and a colony with responsible government was the bond of affection. But what if that, the only bond, is lacking? And in this case how can any reasonable man expect it already to exist?

Here is a colony, three-quarters of whose inhabitants have been at war with you up to less than four years ago, a war that was fought with the utmost determination to the bitter end. It is true that they have been treated since then with a generosity which I believe has no parallel in history, that everything has been done, both to restore their material prosperity and to spare their susceptibilities, and that this treatment has not been without its effect. I believe that my friend,[1] the Lieutenant-Governor of that colony, is probably to-day one of the most popular men

[1] Sir Hamilton Goold-Adams.

within its borders, with Boers quite as much as with Britons. But though all that is very satisfactory as far as it goes, it does not amount to anything that by the wildest stretch of imagination could be called affection for British institutions, or the British Empire.

The process of reconciling the Boers to the new political conditions has been quite as rapid as any rational being could expect. No doubt, however, it would have been even more rapid, and the prospect to-day would be far brighter, but for one most regrettable circumstance. I refer to the fact that almost every man of influence among them—their leaders in the war, to whom they cling with a loyalty which does them honour, the ministers of their Church, whose influence over them is notorious, and the leading writers in the Dutch Press—have from the very outset devoted themselves to thwarting the policy of reconciliation and to keeping alive by every means in their power the bitterest memories of the war. There have no doubt been some honourable exceptions, but in the great majority of cases this has been the attitude adopted by the leaders of the Boers in both the late Republics. Only last month ex-President Steyn, who was merely taking a line which has been taken over and over again by other leaders, made a speech to a Boer audience at Dewetsdorp, and exhorted the mothers who had 'suffered so much' in the concentration camps to remember those sufferings, and to see that their children were not unmindful of the story.

That is bad enough; but there are still worse tactics to which the Boer leaders continually resort. I refer to the policy of trying to stir up the more ignorant and illiterate portion of the Boer people, and to excite and maintain their hatred of the British *régime* by the constant assertion, the mendacious assertion, that Great Britain has not fulfilled the obligations which she undertook under the Terms of Surrender. How, in the face of the plain letter of that document, out of which that accusation has over and over again been refuted, any human being can still go on

reiterating it, absolutely passes my comprehension. But any stick is good enough to beat a dog with, and any fiction, however malicious, however ridiculous, is good enough for these gentlemen, if they can only thereby foster animosity to Great Britain.

What is going to happen under responsible government ? It is more than probable—it is, humanly speaking, certain —that the persons to whom I have referred will form a large majority, if not almost the whole, of that first elected Parliament of the Orange River Colony to which, from the first hour of its existence, the whole legislative and executive power in that colony is to be entrusted. I do not suggest that they will begin by doing anything sensational. All forms will be duly observed ; as why should they not be ? It will be perfectly possible for them, with the most complete constitutional propriety, little by little to reverse all that has been done, and gradually to get rid of the British officials, the British teachers, the bulk of the British settlers, and any offensive British taint which may cling to the Statute-book or the administration.

I can quite understand that from the point of view of what are known as the pro-Boers such a result is eminently desirable. They thought the war was a crime, the annexation a blunder, and they think to-day that the sooner you can get back to the old state of things the better. I say I quite understand that view, though I do not suppose that it is shared by His Majesty's Ministers, or, at any rate, by all of them. What I cannot understand is how any human being, not being a pro-Boer, can regard with equanimity the prospect that the very hand which drafted the ultimatum of October 1899, may within a year be drafting 'Ministers' Minutes' for submission to a British governor who will have virtually no option but to obey them.

What will be the contents of these Minutes, I wonder ? As time goes on it may be a proposal for dispensing with English as an official language, or a proposal for the distribution to every country farmer of a military rifle and so many hundred cartridges, in view of threatened danger from

the Basutos. I think I can see the governor just hesitating a little to put his hand to such a document. In that case, I think I can hear the instant low growl of menace from Press and platform and pulpit, the hints of the necessity of his recall, and the answering scream from the pro-Boer Press of Britain against the ruthless satrap, ignorant of constitutional usage, and wholly misunderstanding his own position, who dared to trample upon the rights of a free people.

I may be told, I know I shall be told, that such notions are the wild imaginings of a disordered brain, that these are theoretical possibilities, having no relation to fact or probability. They are not imaginings. They are just reminiscences. I know what it is to be governor of a self-governing colony, with the disaffected element in the ascendant. I was bitterly attacked for not being sufficiently submissive under the circumstances. Yet even with the least submissive governor, the position is so weak that strange things happen. It was under responsible government, and in the normal working of responsible government, that 1,000,000 cartridges were passed through Cape Colony on the eve of the war, to arm the people who were just going to attack us, and that some necessary cannon were stopped from being sent to a defenceless border town, which directly afterwards was besieged, and which, from want of these cannon, was nearly taken.

But quite apart from these questions of very real but more remote interest, I do want most earnestly to ask His Majesty's Government this most immediate, urgent, practical question. What are you going to do in the Orange River Colony about the new British settlers upon the land —those, I mean, who are Government tenants—about the British teachers in Government schools, about the constabulary, about the officials, high or low, but especially the humbler of them, who have served you with such devotion during these last arduous years ? Are you just going to hand them over like that without any further concern as to what may happen to them, with their legal rights,

no doubt, such as they may be, but with no safeguards against hostile administrative action ?

Remember, this is no case of gradual constitutional development. It is the case of a sudden revolution. Loyalty to the old system will be a black mark against a man under the new. The Government must surely feel that, if it is a question between the grant of full responsible government and this country keeping faith, they should choose the latter. In that case they will find that they have, after all, got to qualify their grant of responsible government, and to proceed in a more gradual and circumspect manner than the words of His Majesty's Speech seem to imply. It is perfectly possible to do this. I believe it is absolutely more practical than the *per saltum* method. And, again, if they are wise and if they really, as the Prime Minister says, are looking forward to federation, they would do well to reserve certain powers in both the new colonies, affecting matters which are of more than local importance, until they are in a position to hand them over to a Federal Government.

And now, returning to the general line of my argument, let me say that, as far as the attitude of the Boer leaders is concerned, there is absolutely no difference between the Orange River Colony and the Transvaal. But, in the case of the Transvaal, the danger arising from that attitude is less considerable. Unless the Transvaal is ruined and depopulated by blows levelled at its principal industry, or unless the distribution of political power in the colony is absolutely unfair, the British element, whether or not it obtains a majority in the Legislature, will in any case command so strong a minority that it should be able to protect itself and should, if it is not hopelessly alienated by our attitude towards it, supply to a great extent that bond of affection which, according to the great statesman I have already quoted, was the only bond which held self-governing colonies to the mother country. Surely, under these circumstances, it is not surprising that in the work of constitutional development the late Government should

have given priority to the case of the Transvaal, and should have contemplated the two colonies proceeding in echelon, if I may use the expression, to the goal of ultimate complete self-government, which was the same for both.

I know it may be said that the fears I have expressed about the Orange River Colony leave no hope of it ever being in a satisfactory condition under responsible government, and that therefore, as we are bound sooner or later to give it responsible government, why not give it now? why irritate them by delay? My Lords, I would like to join issue in the most direct manner with those who take up this position. In the first place, let me say that I am an out-and-out advocate of ultimate complete self-government, even in the Orange River Colony. If I had not been, I could never have put my hand to the Terms of Surrender, in which that prospect was referred to. But I was satisfied that we were not holding out the hope of anything which we were not certain to grant in any case, and that complete self-government on the basis of the political equality of all white men was the only possible, the only desirable, goal of the work of political reconstruction in both colonies.

To that goal, every line of our policy, so far as I was responsible for it, has converged. Nor have I ever doubted that, though the road might be long, though the process might be slow, and must, if it was to stand the best chance of success, be gradual, we should with patience and circumspection be able ultimately to arrive at a thoroughly satisfactory result. Every year that passed the bitter memories of the war would grow a little more distant, and the trick of playing upon them less effective. Every year the obvious solicitude of the Government for the welfare of the people, the multiplication of good schools, the improvement of agriculture, the spread of railways, the hundred and one works of material advancement, would win us friends, or diminish the hostility of enemies. Every year the new population would become more firmly rooted on the soil, and get on to better terms with the older inhabitants. Let me be quite frank and say that, even in

the most favourable circumstances, even if sufficient time had been granted for all these influences to produce their inevitable effect, we might have found, when we came to granting complete self-government to the Orange River Colony, that it was still a source of some solicitude to Imperial statesmen. But I felt that, if things went well elsewhere, it would not be a source of danger.

And here I come to the kernel of the whole business. Whether responsible government in the Orange River Colony can, or cannot, be introduced with safety, depends on the general political situation throughout South Africa. Natal and Rhodesia are all right in any case. But in the Cape Colony, when the rebels are restored to the register, as they soon must be, the Bond will no doubt once more assert its domination; and with the Cape Colony under Bond domination, I say that it is a very risky business to give complete self-government to the Orange River Colony, unless we can absolutely rely, to restore the balance, upon a prosperous and loyal Transvaal. That was, and is, the key of the whole South African situation.

If I may digress for a moment, I should like to say that people in England have never fully appreciated—and that is one of the weakest points in the whole position—how great, how decisive, that prosperity and loyalty of the Transvaal in favourable circumstances might be; how important a factor in the peaceful federation of South Africa and the whole future of the Empire. Just now the Transvaal, indeed all South Africa, is under a cloud. It has cost us great sacrifices. The compensations which we expected, and reasonably expected, have not come, and people rush to the conclusion that they will never come. The local difficulties of the Transvaal—though this is the fault of our party system and not of the colony—are a curse to the political life of this country. Men are sick of the whole affair, and, as is always the case, under such circumstances, the croakers are magnifying every trouble, and spreading broadcast the most gloomy anticipations.

Well, I am old enough to have lived through all this

before. I remember when year after year this same gloom, these same jeremiads, were all concentrated on our policy in Egypt. That was before we had had time to make Egypt a magnificent success. And the analogy of Egypt applies also in other respects. All this calumny with which the air is thick, all this raving about mammon and 'Randlords,' and the war having been a war for gold, and the liberties of a people having been trampled underfoot to satisfy the greed of ruthless capitalists—substitute 'bondholders' for 'Randlords,' and you have an almost literal repetition of the hysterics of the early eighties. To-day the detractors have altered their tune about Egypt, and are even extolling our work there—which, if they had had their way, would never have been done—in order to discredit by contrast our work in South Africa, which is still passing through the years of stress and strain. I do not suggest, for a moment, that the circumstances of the two countries are in any way similar. But the moral—the moral of patience, of tenacity, of turning a deaf ear to the consistent vilifiers of the policy of their country, and of the honour of its statesmen—is the same.

My Lords, as I have said, if you aim at political stability in South Africa, you need a prosperous and loyal Transvaal. The right plan in my opinion was to go gently until you had built it up. A cautious line in constitutional development, and full steam ahead in the material recuperation of the country—that was the true policy in both the new colonies—always with a view to ultimate complete self-government. But as you have decided against the gradual method, as you are going not only to plunge into full self-government at once in the Transvaal, but to go at an equally break-neck pace in the Orange River Colony, then it is of vital and urgent importance—it may make the whole difference between our ultimately retaining or losing South Africa—that you do nothing to hamper the growth of the Transvaal, or to alienate the affections of its people.

What is the outlook in that respect to-day? My Lords, I say it with the deepest regret, the outlook is far worse,

in my humble opinion, than it was three months ago. Six months ago, three months ago, it looked as if we were through our worst troubles in the Transvaal. The economic crisis was over. Trade returns, railway returns, revenue —every index of the general economic condition of the country was showing very satisfactory results. The amount paid by the mines in wages and salaries was £1,871,000 more in 1904-5—the first Chinese year—than in 1903-4. The amount paid by them for stores was £821,000 more. The expenditure of this large sum by its immediate recipients was giving a powerful impetus to every industry in the country, and to agriculture. The number of whites in profitable employment had enormously increased. The surplus population was almost absorbed, and there would soon have been a demand for further immigration. The reviving prosperity of industry and of agriculture was raising the spirits of the people—and, believe me, there is nothing like common prosperity to soften the asperities of racial rivalry.

Moreover, the improvement radiating from the Transvaal was beginning to make itself felt, as sooner or later it was bound to make itself felt, in every part of South Africa; and, according to the latest returns, Cape Colony and Natal, which had suffered so deeply in consequence of the depression in the central state, were showing unmistakable signs of revival. As compared with that, what is the position to-day? What is the position of the great industry of the Transvaal, the great industry of South Africa, as it has been left by the acts and the declarations of His Majesty's Government? I venture to say it is a position of the most complete, the most harassing, the most paralysing uncertainty. No business could possibly flourish under such conditions; and we have just got to face the fact that the economic development of the Transvaal is definitely stopped. The best we can hope is that things will not go back. There is no chance of their going forward until the menace at present hanging over the colony is removed.

My Lords, if I were to attempt to enter adequately into the discussion of Chinese labour, either on its economic or on its ethical side, I should keep you here till midnight. Moreover, we have now reached a stage in this controversy, which, sooner or later, is reached in every controversy, when no one can any longer hope to make converts. But, if this is not the time for argument, it is a time for a profession of faith. The tide of prejudice is running strongly against this system. That is the more reason why those who believe in it should speak out boldly. I know that I bear a large share of the responsibility for the introduction of Chinese labour. I am not going to apologise for it. I am firmly convinced I was right.

I did not go into this grave business lightly. When it was first suggested, when the question was first raised, I was as much opposed to it as all the rest of the white population of the Transvaal, except a mere handful of mine-owners and mine experts, a small minority even of their own class. By what subtle alchemy, by what insidious and subterranean process does any one suppose that I, together with thousands of our fellow-countrymen out there—men quite as independent, as honest, as moral, as religious, as the average middle class and upper working class of Great Britain, to which they belong—that I and they were converted to take a different view? We were converted by the facts; and if I was converted a little sooner than some of the rest, it was only because I had earlier and fuller access to the facts, and perhaps more time exhaustively to study them.

But let me add that, however great appeared to me its economic necessity, as revealed by the facts, I should never have felt myself justified in recommending the system, if I had thought it morally wrong. I disliked the idea of it, because I foresaw that it would give us an enormous amount of trouble, though not precisely the trouble that has arisen, that it would be difficult to recruit the coolies, to bring them over, to arrange for them on arrival; difficult to house them, difficult, on the one hand, to prevent their

giving trouble, and, on the other, to protect them against rough usage and against imposition, while the population would have to be protected against outrage. I fully recognised the gravity of all this. These were drawbacks, inconveniences, grave objections, no doubt, but such as with hard work and good administration could all be overcome, as I believe they have been overcome, although, no doubt, some mistakes were made and some very regrettable things happened in the process. These difficulties could not in my judgment be allowed to weigh against the supreme need of the country, not of the mines alone, not of the Transvaal alone, but of every industry, of every portion of South Africa—the need of labour. It would have been otherwise if there had been something in the system which appeared to me inherently and incurably wrong. But that I was—and, after reading pages and pages of declamation and of hair-splitting I still am—totally unable to see.

On the ethical side, the charge against the system has now been reduced to this, that if you admit the Chinese coolies into the Transvaal at all, you are morally bound to admit them for all time and for all purposes. It seems to me that this is an entirely new moral law invented for the particular occasion. These men are aliens. They have no rights in the country by birth or citizenship. No one disputes that the Transvaal would have a right to exclude them or any other aliens. What is contended is, that it has no right to admit aliens for a limited time and a particular object. But it is surely less interference with the freedom of the Chinaman, to admit him for a certain time and for a certain purpose, than to exclude him altogether. The people of the Transvaal want the Chinese for one purpose only. The Chinese are delighted to come, fully understanding that it is for that purpose only. The purpose itself is a good one. It is labour, arduous and disagreeable labour no doubt, but still straightforward, honest labour. I say, under these circumstances, it is tyrannous, yes, tyrannous on the part of the people of this country, to

prevent the Transvaal people and the Chinese from entering into this arrangement between themselves, and I say that tyranny is immoral.

It has been said, and I sympathise with the remark and with the spirit that animates it, that there is no honest work which British workmen cannot do, and that they could do the work for which the Chinese are brought into the Transvaal, at a certain wage. But the point is, that the enterprise cannot afford the wage which British workmen would require, and rightly require. The British workman will not, and ought not, to accept the only wage which for that particular work the mines can afford to pay. It would mean to him degradation. But for the Chinaman, with his different standard of living, this same wage is not degradation, but advancement. And in doing this work which he can do without degradation, though the British workman could not, he is at the same time creating work of a different kind, which the British workman can do with advantage. The arrangement is the most reasonable, I might almost say the most providential, which can be imagined; and it seems to me unreasonable, harsh, and tyrannous, both to the Chinaman and to the Briton, to forbid it.

So much about the prospect on its economic side. Now, how about the political? Let me say at once that, even from the political point of view, I attach far more importance to the general prosperity of the Transvaal, to the development of its industry and its agriculture, to making it a great country, the home of thousands of working British people, carrying on an ever-increasing trade with their fellow-workers over here—I say I attach more importance to that than to this or that franchise, this or that distribution of seats, always provided you do nothing ludicrously unfair. I thought that in both these respects what is known as the Lyttelton Constitution was a very fair one. I am sorry it has been upset. But I do not say that some other arrangement might not be devised, which could be equally fair, though I should not so describe any plan which

did not give the young unmarried or newly-married residents, who form so large and important an element in the Transvaal population, and bear so large a part of the burden of taxation, their full share of political power. I should not so describe any plan which involved the total swamping of the small towns. And, fortunately, abstract justice in this respect coincides with political expediency. For it is to the country towns and to the average professional and middle-class and working-class voter of the Rand and of Pretoria, that you must look to prevent political power in the colony falling too much under plutocratic influence. The bulk of the country voters will do what 'Het Volk' tells them, and 'Het Volk' is not going to save you from 'Mammon.' It is quite as willing to-day as the old Transvaal Government was before the war, to make its own bargain with 'Mammon.' It will go for Chinese labour, or for some bad substitute, such as forced Kaffir labour, which really is 'tainted with slavery,' if thereby it can only get complete control of the country schools.

There never was a question of this kind, a question of the distribution of political power, more complex and of more far-reaching importance, than the present one. But obviously I cannot discuss its details with the noble Earl across the table to-night. We are in complete ignorance why Mr. Lyttelton's Constitution was rejected, or what the Government are going to put in its place. Probably the Government themselves do not yet know. But what I want particularly to ask is this. Are we never to know until everything is decided? Is this matter to be withdrawn entirely from the cognisance of Parliament and of the country, until we wake up some fine morning and find ourselves in the presence of an accomplished fact, which we may greatly dislike, and there is no room for criticism or even for suggestion? I most sincerely hope that the noble Earl will assure us that that is not going to happen.

The case is entirely different from Mr. Lyttelton's Constitution. That was avowedly temporary and transitional. There would have been plenty of subsequent opportunities

to alter and amend it. But this is to be the grant of full responsible government. This country is going to say its last word about the constitution of the Transvaal, and at the same time, perhaps, to give the decisive bent to the whole future of that colony and of South Africa. That is so grave a step, the issues involved are so momentous, that no Government is justified in taking it without first submitting it to public discussion.

My Lords, I must admit that I look forward to the future with deep concern. I should have spoken perhaps even more strongly, but I have wished not to seem to make a party attack. My desire is to save our position in South Africa, and not to do anything to injure, to discredit, or to hamper the Government. I am not much of a party man any way. I have had too long and bitter an experience of the evil effects of party spirit on those national interests which it has been my duty and privilege, however imperfectly, to serve.

If I were a party man I should try to goad the Government into going still further than they have done, into completely crippling the industry of the Transvaal, into recasting the electoral system of that colony to the detriment of the British element, into hurrying on full responsible government in the Orange River Colony without any safeguard or precautions; because I feel certain that, while the people of Great Britain may not realise what all this means while it is being done, they will greatly dislike the consequences when the thing has been done, and they will visit with condign punishment those who have done it. If I were a party man, I should rejoice to see the extremists, who have already dragged it so far, run away with the Government coach altogether. But from my point of view, the alienation of South Africa is too high a price to pay for another swing of the pendulum at home. For the pendulum may swing backwards and forwards many times, but South Africa once lost will be lost for ever.

## HOUSE OF LORDS.—March 27, 1906

### *Land Settlement in South Africa*

[The following speech was delivered in a debate initiated by Lord Lovat, who had asked His Majesty's Government '(1) As to their policy in regard to land settlement in the Transvaal and Orange River colonies; and (2) As to the steps they are to take to safeguard the interests of British farmers and others who have recently taken up land under the Land Settlement Ordinance in those colonies.']

My Lords, in venturing to address the House after the sympathetic speech of the noble Earl,[1] I do most earnestly beg that I may not be regarded as desiring to cause any trouble to the Government, or to import any bitterness or any unnecessary alarm into the discussion of the South African situation. I should like most sincerely to thank the noble Earl for the tribute which he has paid to the Agricultural Department of the Transvaal. To those of my countrymen, who have worked desperately hard during the last few years to introduce better methods of farming into the Transvaal, and that mainly in the interest of the Dutch, who form the majority of the population, it has been a subject of legitimate distress, that in all the discussions that have taken place about South Africa their useful efforts have been very largely ignored. In fact, I do not remember any reference to the subject in any discussion that has taken place in this country, until the sympathetic words that have just fallen from the noble Earl.

I hold in my hand the *Agricultural Journal* of the Transvaal, which gives some account of the vast amount of work—both official and unofficial—which is being done. I have sometimes asked gentlemen more acquainted with agriculture than I am myself to give me their opinion of that publication and the work to which it refers. I am glad to say that I have been told by high authorities that it is as good as, if not better than, any work of the kind produced in any of our Colonies, although this is a colony which has been only three or four years in the

[1] Lord Elgin, then Secretary of State for the Colonies.

British Empire. In all the discussions that have taken place on this subject in this country, I do not think the vast amount of earnest effort which has been directed to the improvement of the agricultural industry, which is the only resource of the majority of the dwellers on the land—this industry by which the Colonies will have mainly to live after the mines have been exhausted—has been at all sufficiently appreciated.

The noble Earl was sympathetic with regard to the work done for the promotion of agriculture generally, but he was barely sympathetic with regard to the question of land settlement. He will forgive me for saying that in the statistics he gave to the House, he, I am sure accidentally, did not give land settlement quite as fair treatment as it deserved. I think he said there was a loss of something like fifty per cent. He will be glad I am sure, if I am able to point out that the real loss on an expenditure of something like £2,200,000 which took place up to 30th June last, was only £200,000, and that only in one colony, the Transvaal. In the Orange River there has been an expenditure of £1,200,000, and there is good reason for supposing that every penny of that will come back. Speaking in round figures, I find that in addition to the £850,000, which has been invested in the purchase of land at a rate so reasonable that the settlers on it have lately decided not to apply for a revaluation, there has been something like £150,000 invested in live-stock and improvements to the land, including expenditure on water boring, which has had successful results, and which is added to what the settlers have to repay. Something like £100,000 has been given in cash advances to settlers, while the rest is largely accounted for by other improvements, such as the commencement of certain expenditure on irrigation.

I say that in the Orange River Colony the whole of the £1,200,000 expended is likely to come back. In the Transvaal, I read in the latest Report of the Commissioner of Lands, that he estimates there is value to the extent of £600,000 in land purchased, £200,000 in capital advanced

to the settlers, and other assets, and that the loss in the Transvaal on this experiment amounts to only £200,000. That, too, was a loss incurred almost entirely in respect of a class known as squatter settlers—ex-irregulars, whom pressure of public opinion both here and in the colony compelled us to settle on the land immediately after the war, although the conditions were not favourable to such settlement, and although these men were not the sort of settlers we should have selected if we had had a free hand, and not the sort who are being selected under the careful methods of to-day.

Lord Elgin: I was wrong in regard to the fifty per cent. loss. I see that the noble Lord is correct in his version.

Lord Milner: I am glad the noble Earl recognises that. I felt sure it was merely an accidental mistake on his part. I would close this part of the discussion by simply saying that, as one of the first and one of the most ardent believers in the policy of land settlement, I thank the noble Earl for his sympathetic attitude. Now, I am sorry if I have to introduce into this discussion what may be regarded as a discordant note, and expose myself once more to the charge of speaking not merely in a Cassandra-like spirit, but in a somewhat bitter spirit. There is nothing I am more anxious to do than to avoid this. I recognise the good-will of the noble Earl, and I do not want to create difficulties for him in the great and arduous task which he has before him. But if I am to help him I must tell the House quite frankly what I know. And what I know is this—that the policy of land settlement, the position of the settlers at present on the land, and the future of the experiment, is in great and imminent danger, and that if special provisions are not made in the constitutional arrangements which are before us, not only will this great and beneficial work of land settlement be absolutely stopped, but the majority of those men at present on the land—I am

speaking of the Orange River Colony—will be squeezed out. I wish to support that statement by one or two authorities. The noble Earl says these men have got their legal rights, and it is not to be supposed that, whatever constitutional arrangements are made, they will be in any danger. It is true they have their legal rights ; but it is also true that, if these new settlers, who have to contend with all the difficulties he has pointed out, have not in the first years of their struggle a sympathetic and helpful administration that will give them time, and not press for instalments in years when they have met with serious and exceptional misfortunes, their position is an absolutely unsafe one.

Now, what is the feeling of the settlers themselves about this matter ? Not so very long before I left South Africa, the administration, which, of course, at that time was thoroughly sympathetic to the settlers, was making certain advances to the settlers in the Orange River Colony for the purpose of purchasing sheep, which they were to repay in five years, an experiment which I am glad to say has proved so far a very successful one. The deputation of settlers which interviewed the Government on the subject was headed by one of the most energetic and capable of the settlers, chosen by themselves, and in the course of the discussion he made the following remarks, which I am quoting from the official shorthand note which was taken at the time. He said :—

'There is one other matter which appears to the settlers as one of the gravest importance to their interests. Suppose Government makes this grant, and another Government comes into power at home, and the Orange River Colony is given responsible government, what will be the position of the settlers ? The land settlement scheme will meet with very great opposition. The settlers would like to see this Government place land settlement on a sound basis, so that it will be beyond the power of any representative Government to oust them from their holdings. They are all of opinion that if self-government is granted to the Orange River Colony in the near future, it will be a lamentable mistake. If I can go back to the settlers and

tell them that there is going to be no change, that any change of Government cannot affect their interests in any way, if I can say that they must just go on as best they can, being assured of the sympathy of the Government, and that grace will be given to them until good times come, then I know that the men will be satisfied to go on and do their level best. But these men are sensible enough to know that they will receive not the slightest consideration when responsible government comes.'

That was the feeling of a representative man among the settlers little more than a year ago. What is their feeling to-day? I have here a letter—one of the many painful and distressing letters which reached me by my last South African mail—in which the writer says :—

'After all England has sacrificed and suffered for the Orange River Colony, it is, indeed, hard if the Dutch are to be put in power; for, however much Ministers in England may hope and expect, it will bring about bitter feeling between the two nations. It will mean that the English will have to trek. It spells ruin to the very people who in time would be the greatest factor in making the colony both loyal and prosperous. Would there be any use in the English people appealing to the king? If there was any idea of treating the Boers in the way it is contemplated to treat the British, most of whom fought for their country, the whole world would be flooded with their abuse and recriminations. It is already suggested that the new constitution must safeguard the black population; but hundreds, nay thousands, of English men, women, and children, may be complacently abandoned to starvation. Hope to the contrary will be as much use as if a man pushed another who could not swim into deep water and calmly trusted he would not drown.'

I make every allowance for the state of alarm in which these people are, and I make every allowance for a certain amount of exaggeration; but another letter which reached me by the same mail, and which comes also from the Orange River Colony, and from a Government official familiar with the conditions of many of the settlers, says :—

'The prospect before the settlers is dark. If the Government were to foreclose, the great majority of them could not weather the storm.'

I press this upon the Government now that there is time, in order that they may avoid steps which would lead to disaster. The position is this. I entirely agree with the noble Duke,[1] that there is a good feeling between the individual Dutch farmer and the English farmer settled side by side with him upon the land. There is very often good feeling; there is a growing tendency towards good feeling. That is the reason why some of us are so intensely keen to see the settlement of British people on the land. We know that they will never be more than a small proportion, that the majority must be Dutch; but we feel that the introduction of a British element to the land brings British people into closer relations and closer touch with the Dutch people than is possible in the towns, and forms a valuable link between the two. Not only do they come to regard the Dutch with greater sympathy, but they create in the Dutch greater sympathy with Englishmen than they would otherwise feel.

Even to-day, when the difficulties are great, and when memories of the war have not yet died out, and when for many reasons the experiment is being tried under unfavourable conditions, there is a growing good feeling between the British settlers and their Dutch neighbours. But I say with deep regret, yet again with absolute conviction, that that good feeling between individuals, on which we are justified in resting so much hope, is not going to save the British settlers from hostile executive action in a country in which they may have few representatives or no representatives in the Legislature. It will not save them, because the policy of the dominant party, or rather the policy of the men whom for the next ten or twenty years the Dutch Afrikanders will follow, and return to power and support in power, is a policy directly hostile to the settlers, and is so openly declared.

The language used by the leading Dutch newspapers is language of bitter hostility to the plan of land settlement, which they wrongly regard as an attempt to swamp

[1] The Duke of Westminster.

the Dutch, whereas it is an attempt to introduce a new and valuable element on the land, which shall form a link with the Dutch. It is an absolute certainty that these settlers have got to face in the Orange River Colony—I am not speaking of the Transvaal, where their position is a safer one—hostile executive action in future. Therefore, although I could not expect the noble Earl to say more than he has said to-night on the subject, I would most earnestly submit the consideration of this question to him and to the Government in order that they may make some provision to protect these men, liable as they are to be ousted by a hostile executive. I beg them to take that to heart.

And let me assure them that there is no single act which could be done by this Government, especially if they are going to give complete responsible government at once to the Orange River Colony—there is no single act which would be more calculated to reassure the British minority, who may possibly not have a single representative in the new Legislature, than if the Government took steps for the protection of this population on the land. Surely it is not a difficult thing to do. What is to prevent the Government, while giving if they please—and the Government know that I think it a rash proceeding—full and responsible government to the Orange River Colony, from maintaining the Land Settlement Board for a certain number of years as a branch of the British administration and under the Colonial Office? What objection is there to their cutting out, as it were, this little corner of the administration and keeping it under their own control, and so ensuring that these settlers shall continue to receive that sympathetic and considerate treatment without which it is certain that many of them will go to the wall?

Nothing can possibly be calculated to start responsible government under more favourable circumstances than any act on the part of the Government at home, which would show its recognition of the difficulties of these people and its desire to protect them. Even if their fears were groundless—and I am convinced that they are not—the

fact of the Government here extending its protecting hand to them at a time like the present would be one not only reassuring to them but most reassuring to the whole British minority in the colony. That minority is at the present moment in a state of the greatest anxiety and alarm. There can be no doubt of it whatever; and if that anxiety and alarm continue, they will prove of the greatest difficulty to the Government in any scheme it may submit to Parliament. Proper consideration of this land settlement and proper protection of the settlers on the land would be more than anything else conducive to the good reception of fresh constitutional arrangements in the Orange River Colony. I hope I may be acquitted, for once, of having imported anything like bitterness into the discussion, in trying to impress on the Government the great seriousness of the question and the magnitude of the issue involved.

## LONDON, EMPIRE DAY.—MAY 24, 1906

[In the early months of 1906 Lord Milner was once more the object of sustained attack by the extreme Radical and pro-Boer section of the dominant political party, flushed with their victory at the polls, and greatly incensed by his criticisms of the South African policy of the Government—see p. 93. An incident which had occurred in the administration of the Transvaal, unknown to the High Commissioner and due entirely to the error of a subordinate, but for which Lord Milner accepted entire responsibility, was seized on as an opportunity, and made the point and pretext of assault. And a resolution of censure, which in a modified form the Government accepted, was proposed and pushed through the House of Commons.

This proceeding was not approved by the average Briton at home and abroad. Feeling was outraged by the punishment of a public servant who had recently completed a task of great difficulty and anxiety, committed to him originally, with the approval of both parties, because of his conspicuous fairness, and in the conduct of which, under trial, and against intrigue and obloquy, he had upheld the name and cause of Englishmen.

A resolution expressing 'high appreciation of the services rendered by Lord Milner in South Africa to the Crown and the Empire' was proposed by Lord Halifax in the House of Lords on March 29, 1906, and was carried against the Government by 170 votes to 35. A public address

to the same effect received no less than 370,000 signatures in the United Kingdom. And on Empire Day 1906 Lord Milner was entertained by a gathering greater in all respects but one, and more representative than that of March 29, 1897, and constituting as remarkable a tribute of the kind as is recorded. Mr. Chamberlain presided, and proposed Lord Milner's health, as Mr. Asquith had proposed it on the former occasion —see p. 1—the other speakers being Lord Curzon and the late Field-Marshal Sir George White. The following was Lord Milner's speech in reply]:—

Mr. Chamberlain, my Lords, and Gentlemen,—I hope that I shall be rightly interpreting the feelings of this company if I do not treat the demonstration of to-night too much as a personal matter. Most assuredly I am not indifferent to the personal aspect of it. I should be a strange being if I were not deeply touched by, and grateful for, such a manifestation of confidence and sympathy as this gathering affords, culminating as it has done in the reception you have given to this toast, proposed by Mr. Chamberlain in terms so eloquent, and touched by so much personal feeling. I really have no words to tell you how deeply I appreciate your kindness. I hope my thanks may make up by their depth and sincerity what they lack in eloquence and amplitude of expression. But I am not so egotistical as to take it all to myself. For every man in this room there are hundreds who have been moved in one way or another to make a protest against the proceedings in the House of Commons to which Mr. Chamberlain has referred. On various occasions in my life, when I have for one reason or another occupied a position of prominence on the public stage, I have been the recipient of a large correspondence, not all of it complimentary. I suppose that is the experience of every public man. But never before have I had such a deluge of letters—hardly any of them, in this instance, unfriendly—coming from the most various and unexpected quarters, not only from many people utterly unknown to me, but often from people who prefaced their protests by declaring themselves political supporters of the present Government. I have no doubt

whatever that they represented a large body of popular opinion. And the meaning of it all I take to be this, that there is a strong instinct in the heart of the British nation to treat its public servants with a certain broad generosity—an instinct which especially resents their being prejudiced in any way by the accidents and exigencies of party warfare. And that instinct, my Lords and gentlemen, is a great asset. It makes for the nation being faithfully and fearlessly served. Of course, nobody desires that the servants of the State—I am speaking of those whose offices do not change with changes of party—should on that account be free from criticism, or, if need be, from censure. But the general feeling is, and it is a right feeling, that their work and service should be judged as a whole, that allowance should be made for their difficulties, and that the public should not be extreme to mark what is done amiss when it is neither possible nor desirable to be constantly marking every successful discharge of arduous duty.

As I look round this room to-night I see many old friends, some of them friends of my college days, and some of even earlier days, who, no doubt, with the glorious partiality of friendship, would be anxious to stand by me, as I hope I should stand by them, in any time of stress. There are many more, distinguished in political life, with whom I have had the honour to be brought into contact in the course of my public work. But there are yet others, and not a few, not personally known to me, though well known to the world for their eminence in their several walks of life, who, as a general rule, take no active part in political controversy, and who certainly can in no sense be described as party men. Their presence, which I deeply appreciate, is due, I take it, to that movement of public opinion of which I have spoken. Their desire is to show their recognition of service rendered, however imperfectly, yet at least honestly and whole-heartedly rendered, to the sovereign and the nation, and their disapproval of the attempt to cast an unwonted slur upon the man who rendered it on what appear to them inadequate grounds. But they have

rallied to the defence not so much of a man as of a principle. And so I venture to thank them, not only on my own behalf but for all those who may now or hereafter find themselves in positions of exceptional difficulty in the service of the State, and standing in need of an indulgent judgment on the part of their countrymen.

But, having said that, let me hasten to add that I have no wish to pose as a martyr. If ever I had ground for complaint I have been amply compensated. Neither have I had much time or heart, in these last few months, to worry about my personal concerns. I have been far too anxious about South Africa. This is not the occasion to enter into details about that burning topic of political controversy. Indeed, it is one about which I find it particularly difficult to speak on any occasion without the fear of doing more harm than good. The Ministry evidently are or have been—I know nothing of their secrets, I am only judging from facts and utterances patent to all men—deeply divided on this subject. More than that, they have sometimes been unable to resist being deflected, even from their own declared policy, by the pressure of a certain section of their followers. That section is very active and militant, and it has accordingly exercised an influence altogether out of proportion, as I venture to think, to the amount of public opinion behind it on this particular question. My difficulty has always been how to warn the Government and the nation of the dangers ahead, of some of which Ministers themselves appeared at one time quite unaware, without stirring up those, who were pushing the Government into extreme courses, to a yet greater activity in mischief. But there was a time at which silence would have been, so at least it seemed to me, little short of a crime. Knowing South Africa as I do, deeply attached as I am to that country, and bound by every consideration of honour and gratitude to those who have striven with me to keep it within the Empire, how could I be silent when a course was being pursued which could only lead to the economic ruin of South Africa and the complete political

alienation of her people from the Mother Country? Mistakes were being made, even worse mistakes were being threatened, while the tone adopted towards the colonists by some of the followers of the Government, and, I must add, by some of its mouthpieces, was calculated to produce the greatest exasperation. But it is fair to say, and I for one am most glad to be able to say, that things seem lately to have taken something of a turn for the better. It may be that a closer acquaintance with the facts has induced a change of attitude. In any case, moderating influences are making themselves felt within the ranks of the party in power. It is as yet too soon to say whether they will triumph. But there is at least ground for hope that the continuity of policy, which has been so disastrously interrupted, may to some extent be re-established. It seems to me that at this moment Lord Elgin, for whose fairness of temper and excellence of intention it is impossible to feel anything but respect, has got a great chance, a chance more especially of recovering some of that colonial sympathy which has been so largely alienated. In the native trouble which has arisen in Natal, and which is a grave trouble, and may be a protracted one, even if it never becomes acute, the Imperial authorities can in many ways give invaluable assistance to the colonists. If they give it judiciously and unobtrusively, without undue interference with the men directly responsible, and if at the same time they can defend the actions and motives of the colonists from unjust aspersion and attack, it will go a long way to convince, not only the people of Natal, but the people of all South Africa, that the Government of Great Britain are still their friends. I venture in all humility to throw out that suggestion. It is clear that what all patriotic men have to aim at is to try to remove these delicate questions of colonial policy, as questions of foreign policy have already, for the time being at least, been removed—and that with the happiest results—from the arena of party conflict. If the Ministry will only resist the impulsion of those whose judgment is warped by suspicion and

distrust of their colonial fellow-countrymen, if they will only stick to their own better mind, and let themselves be guided by the man on the spot, to whose judgment and statesmanship they have themselves paid the strongest tribute, then I say, it is not for me or for any one who has the welfare of South Africa at heart to harp upon past errors, or to twit them with inconsistency. It is one thing to criticise in order to prevent mischief, quite another to criticise for the mere love of the thing. I have made too many mistakes myself to take any pleasure in that sort of polemics. Indeed, I can honestly say that I have no more fervent hope than that I may be able with a good conscience to abstain from further fighting and to watch, in silence, the affairs of South Africa developing, not, doubtless, altogether in accordance with my own views—that is more than any man can expect—but at any rate on lines not inconsistent with her future prosperity and unity, or with her becoming more and more closely bound in interest and sympathy to the other members of the British family of nations. That, after all, is the great object for which so many efforts and sacrifices have been made, but which, if attained, will compensate us for them all.

The expression of that hope suggests some considerations of a wider, and, I would gladly think, less controversial kind. I cannot but feel that it adds greatly to the interest of this gathering that you have chosen to hold it on Empire Day, and that the chair is occupied by a statesman who has done more than any man living to give new life to the aspirations of which Empire Day is the expression. No doubt there are reasons of a personal kind why I must be especially appreciative of the part he has taken in the proceedings to-night. During more than six eventful years he was my political chief. And I well remember the impression which he made on all those who served under him. Lord Rosebery has eloquently said of the elder Pitt that 'there was that in him which made every remote soldier and blue-jacket feel, when he was in office, that there was a man in Downing Street, and a man

whose eye penetrated everywhere.' My Lords and gentlemen, there was a man in Downing Street in my time, and there was that in him which made every remote servant of the State work with better heart and a keener purpose, and made the colonists, with whom Downing Street has often been a byword for bureaucratic rigidity and aloofness, believe in a new Downing Street full of vigilance and sympathy. And Mr. Chamberlain, when he ceased to be my chief, did not cease to be my protector. I am not likely to forget that only the other day, when I was taken to task for something with which he had no concern whatever, and connected with a policy for which he was in no way responsible, he chivalrously came to the rescue and defended me in a manner which almost made it a pleasure to be attacked. But I have something more in my mind than these personal causes for gratitude. I am thinking of what we all owe him, all of us, at least, who look beyond the Empire as it is to the Empire as it might be, for the immense impulse he has given to the thoughts and sympathies and movements which make for a more effective union of the scattered communities of the British race. I know that in the practical application of that great idea everything as yet remains to be done. I know that the idea itself is far from being as yet generally accepted or even clearly understood. It may even be said to have had—in this country at any rate—a temporary set-back. We are all at sixes and sevens about the best way to proceed, and in the confusion over the right road to the goal, the goal itself seems at times to be receding out of sight. But the disappointment which one feels as the years pass and one grows older, and nothing happens, does not alter the fact that the idea is silently growing all the time. The surface waters are agitated hither and thither, but there is a strong under-current which may yet carry the ship into port. And the younger nations, I believe, are more affected by it than we are. They are moving if we are not. That is the most hopeful sign of the times, and it is due in great measure to the new spirit infused into the

relations of the Mother Country with the Colonies, and of the Colonies with one another by the broad-minded policy, the keen sympathy with colonial aspirations, the intense faith in the race, which characterised the administration of Mr. Chamberlain. By his generous treatment of the Colonies as equals he swept away the old idea of ascendancy, which they regarded with suspicion, and gave a great impetus to the new idea of partnership, which appeals alike to their interest and to their self-respect. And now that they have got hold of it they show a strong disposition to work it out in their own way. It may be that, while we are hesitating and debating, the first practical steps towards the realisation of his ideals will be taken by the Colonies among themselves, and that new links of Empire will be forged on the shores of the Pacific and the Indian Ocean.

But, my Lords and gentlemen, you may think that I am growing too fanciful, and I am certain that I have been too long. Your kindness and indulgence have drawn me on, but I am not going to be drawn on any further. My simple duty to-night is performed when I have thanked you, as I do one and all once more from the bottom of my heart, for the great honour which you have done me, and which must always remain one of the most cherished memories of my life.

## HOUSE OF LORDS.—July 10, 1906

### *Cost of National Service*

[The following is a passage from a speech on Lord Roberts's motion 'to call attention to the unpreparedness of the nation for war, and the necessity for action being taken in accordance with the recommendation of the Elgin Commission; that Commission having declared that the true lesson of the war was, that no military system could be considered satisfactory which did not contain powers of expansion outside the limit of the regular forces of the Crown, whatever that limit might be.']

When we are considering the cost of such a system, do not let us forget that there are many ways of wasting

money upon military preparations—waste to which a nation that has some uneasiness about its own military weakness is particularly liable. There is the waste of money involved in constant changes, in foolish, spasmodic expenditure, often followed by equally spasmodic and foolish retrenchment. If you add together all the losses in which this country has been involved by continually changing its military system, by its continual unpreparedness for war, losses which perhaps quadrupled and quintupled the cost of the last war in which we were engaged, I think it may be doubted whether a system of universal military training, however costly, would not, if only from the sense of security it would give us, make up for the sacrifices it would entail.

I am sure of this, that there is one form of military expenditure which in any case is not lost. I mean expenditure in developing the manhood of the nation. You get it back in vastly improved physique—one of the most serious problems, I believe, which faces this nation at the present moment—in the development of certain qualities of discipline, order, method, precision, punctuality, and, above all, in a great development of public spirit. The money which is spent in the physical and moral development of your men you get back in peace as well as in war. At the risk of wearying your Lordships, I would in conclusion quote, from among the mass of quotations I could bring forward from competent and trained observers, what has been said with regard to the effect of the German military system, with all its faults, upon the progress of modern Germany, by a very able and careful inquirer, and one who is especially distinguished by the total absence of any of that bias, which so often attaches to sociological experts, against their own country. The following is a passage from a book on *Industrial Efficiency*, by Dr. Shadwell :—

'Under the German military system the liability comes just when a lad has learned his trade, and undoubtedly forms a break in his civil career, but I have not met with two opinions

about its educational value to the individual and its industrial value to the nation. Perhaps the most striking fact is the physical benefit derived from the exercises, the drill, gymnastics, and a regular life. It turns a weedy, anæmic lad into a well-knit, upstanding man, with sound organs and well-developed limbs. It further teaches him cleanliness, discipline, order, authority, self-respect, and respect for others. The effect in the workshop is visible at every turn. It is not too much to say that military service has been in a great measure the making of industrial Germany.'

That is the opinion of many men who have studied carefully the effect of the military system of Continental nations, not so much from the point of view of their military strength as from that of their social organisation and industrial efficiency. For my own part I venture, however paradoxical it may seem, to express the conviction that the nations who, like the Germans, adhere to the principle of universal military training, are perfectly right, and that in the long-run, the peoples who are prepared to undergo the toil and face the danger of personal service will outstrip, not only in war, but also in the competitions of peace, the peoples who shrink from it.

## HOUSE OF LORDS.—November 14, 1906

### *British Settlers in South Africa*

[The following speech was made on a motion by Lord Lovat—see p. 109—who had renewed his inquiries with regard to the intention of His Majesty's Government as to land settlement in the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies, and the steps they proposed to take to safeguard the interests of British settlers. Great anxiety was at this time felt as to the future of these settlers, who, in view of the impending introduction of self-government in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony, were likely to pass under an administration which regarded them in no friendly spirit, and that before they had had time to overcome the initial difficulties of their new position. Ex-President Steyn had said:—'Boycott the English and guide your political action by the cries of the women and children done to death in the Concentration Camps.' General Botha had more temperately declared on April 7, 1906:—'We have

already in many ways pointed out that we are against the land settlement policy of Lord Milner in South Africa.' Under these circumstances the friends of the British settlers made a great effort, which was ultimately successful, to obtain protection for the settlers by having them placed for some years under a Land Board directly responsible to the British Government. At the time when this speech was delivered, no decision had yet been arrived at, and the uncertain tone of the Colonial Secretary was calculated to heighten the uneasiness felt by the champions of the British settlers.]

My Lords, it was with extreme regret that I listened to the remarks of the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies. I do not think that he appreciates, or that the Government at all appreciate, the strength of the feeling which exists on this subject among all those who are interested in British South Africa, or the deep feeling which exists, and the still deeper feeling which, I believe, will exist, throughout the country, when the danger to which these settlers are at present exposed becomes a realised fact. On the other hand, I am greatly encouraged by the speech which has been delivered by the noble Earl [1] who has just sat down, who, I think, on this question voices a large amount of opinion on the part of the supporters of the Government, and of the population of the country generally.

I really deeply deplore the total inadequacy of the statement the Secretary for the Colonies has seen fit to make to-night. He referred to former expressions of sympathy of his with these settlers, which he said I had acknowledged. I fully acknowledge them. I have never had any doubt as to the sympathy of the noble Earl, but what we want is to see his sympathy converted into acts, and the last moment is approaching when that can be done. I realise as much as any one the extreme inconvenience to which your Lordships are put by this question having to be brought forward on the present occasion. I apologise for intruding at this time, but what I wish your Lordships to realise is, that we are making this intrusion because it is a matter of practical and vital urgency. The provision

[1] Lord Durham.

of special protection for the settlers, for which we are appealing, must be made while the matter stands as it does at present, or it cannot be made at all. Let the Letters-Patent issue without any reference to land settlement, and the settlers will pass automatically under the control of the responsible government which is to be set up. You may say that these Letters-Patent are for the Transvaal, and that in the Transvaal, after all, British settlers will have advocates to stand up for them. It is true, I fully admit, that the risks in the Transvaal are less than in the Orange River Colony. But even in the Transvaal there are risks, owing to the fact that there is no provision for the representation of minorities. These settlers will have no direct representation in the Transvaal Parliament at all. But a point which is of far greater importance is this, that the position of the settlers, if it is precarious in the Transvaal, is more than precarious—it is a position of almost certain ruin, unless something is done for them—in the Orange River Colony. If these Letters-Patent issue without any provision for their protection in the Transvaal, then I say it is a moral certainty that, when it comes to the Orange River Colony, the fact that nothing has been done for the settlers in the Transvaal will be quoted as a precedent for leaving them in the lurch in the sister colony. And so we are being drawn step by step down the slope which leads to the abyss of another disgraceful desertion of those who have served us in South Africa. This is my excuse for having intruded on your Lordships' time.

I do not think the historical retrospect in which the noble Earl has indulged makes his case any stronger. That retrospect, on the other hand, will show that we have exercised the extremest patience and the greatest possible desire not unduly to press or hurry the Government in this matter. And if I press them at all to-day it is simply because I feel that, having been the agent of the British Government in putting these people on to the land, and having induced them to put themselves in the position in which they are, I should be the basest of deserters if I did

not do all that lies in my power to save them while there is yet time.

Let me follow as briefly as possible the retrospect of the noble Earl. He said that on 27th March he expressed his sympathy with these settlers. I quite agree. He did make a very sympathetic speech, which filled me, at any rate, with considerable hope. But what was his reason then for not going more into detail about this matter—because it is to be observed that, although the noble Earl has several times expressed his sympathy, he has always given the vital question the go-by ? On that occasion he said it would be premature to discuss the matter before we had the Report of the Commission, which was going out to South Africa to study the question of the Constitution. The Commissioners have been home, how many months ? Three or four. I should like to know, it is one of the things we want to know, what did the Commissioners tell the noble Earl and His Majesty's Government about the settlers ? It would be a great satisfaction to us to hear that the Commissioners reported that they thought our anxiety was all moonshine and that the settlers in the Orange River Colony would be perfectly safe if they were handed over to the tender mercies of a Boer majority. Is the noble Earl prepared to tell us that the Report of the Commission has allayed all fears on this subject ? I think we are entitled to know what the Report of the Commission is.

Then the noble Earl went on to refer to the next occasion on which this matter was brought up, in July. At that date he foreshadowed an attempt, which, as a matter of fact, was subsequently made by His Majesty's Government, to do something for the protection of these settlers. He said that His Majesty's Government were in favour generally of the principle of a Land Board, but that they expressed their approval subject to certain reservations, and one of these was that there must be general consent. It seemed to me, and I said so at the time, a most preposterous thing to admit that these people needed the

protection of a special Land Board, because they were not safe in the hands of the majority of the inhabitants of the Orange River Colony, or of the Government responsible to that majority, and yet to appeal to that very majority to say whether they were to be protected or not.

You ask the people against whom they are to be protected, 'Will you approve of our making special provision for their protection?' The thing is a perfect farce. And the truly farcical nature of it came out in the proceedings initiated by Lord Selborne, as the noble Earl said, on the instructions of His Majesty's Government, with regard to this matter. I should like to refer once more to the terms of Lord Selborne's letter, which was issued with the approval of the Government. It contains a remarkable admission :—

'His Majesty's Government,' it says, 'feel that they have a special obligation to those who have become settlers during the period when they have been directly responsible for the Government of the two colonies, and it is a matter in which public opinion in the United Kingdom takes a deep interest. They would like, therefore, to see land settlement placed under a Board appointed by themselves and altogether divorced from politics, and to that Board they would like to see handed over the responsibility for all existing settlers.'

That was the proposal which Lord Selborne was authorised to make to various representative people in these colonies. But then this suggestion was coupled with a proposal to raise an additional £4,000,000, partly for the relief of the settlers, but partly for further compensation to the Boers, and partly for some other objects, and in that form it seems to have met with no particular favour anywhere. I never expected that it would. I cannot conceive how the Government could have supposed that, with elections just impending, with these colonies about to be endowed with the supreme blessing of party government—that is to say, with the population marshalled into two brigades, each looking out with hawk-like keenness for some reproach to throw in the face of the other—I say I cannot conceive how any

one could have supposed that under these circumstances any party in the Transvaal or the Orange River Colony would make themselves responsible for an additional burden of £4,000,000 being placed on the shoulders of the Colonies, in order to get His Majesty's Government out of a difficulty. It was, in my judgment, quite unreasonable to expect that any result would follow from that proposal. I do not comment on the absurdity of going cap in hand to the Boers and asking them whether they would like to pay another million and a half for British land settlement. Of course they would not like to. But then it was anticipated that the sop which was to be offered to them of another million and a quarter for compensation to themselves would induce them to swallow the pill. Really it is difficult not to smile at the simplicity of those who were seized with that idea. The Boers expect that they are going shortly to be in power. They know they will be in power in the Orange River Colony. Whether they will be in power in the Transvaal Colony or not, they are aware that any Government there will be more or less at their mercy. They look forward, as a matter of fact, to the time when they will be able to provide themselves with this million and a quarter, or any other sum which they may feel desirous of devoting to compensation to themselves, without the accompaniment of any disagreeable concession to the British settlers. The whole plan of saving these settlers by means of this appeal to the various parties in the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony was doomed to failure from the very first.

I wish briefly to sum up the position as it strikes me. Is it, or is it not, a right thing to continue to offer opportunities for British colonists, whether coming from this country or from the other colonies, who, remember, are interested in this matter, too—is it, or is it not, a right thing to keep the door open for them to settle in the new colonies, which have come under the British flag by the exertions of this country and of those colonies also ? If it is right to keep that door open, ought not His Majesty's Government to keep it open

without asking any one whether they are to be allowed to do so or not? But there is a stronger point even than that. Granted that the policy of land settlement was a mistake, that the policy ought to be abandoned, as I hope it will not be abandoned. Even so, you cannot abandon the obligations you have already incurred under it, and surely it is strange for a British Government to go to any body of men anywhere and ask their consent to its fulfilling its own obligations of honour.

I have felt bound to speak strongly on this subject, because I feel it is a vital and urgent matter. Let me say that I still have hope, a strong hope, and especially after the words we have heard from the ministerial benches, that His Majesty's Government may see fit to convert the sympathy which I have no doubt they, or some of them, feel, into action, and not only to do that, but to do it promptly, and let us know where we stand.

I plead, in the first instance, for a continuance of the policy of land settlement as a policy. Remember, it was not lightly adopted. It was adopted on the recommendation of a Royal Commission sent out expressly to study this question at the time of the war, who reported as follows:—

'Dealing with the question as a whole, we desire to express our firm conviction that a well-considered scheme of settlement in South Africa by men of British origin is of the most vital importance to the future prosperity of British South Africa. We find among those who wish to see British rule in South Africa maintained and its influence for good extended but one opinion upon this subject. There even seems reason to fear lest the vast expenditure of blood and treasure which has marked the war should be absolutely wasted, unless some strenuous effort be made to establish in the country, at the close of the war, a thoroughly British population large enough to make a recurrence of division and disorder impossible.'

It was that policy which was initiated, not by me, as one noble lord, I think, said—I was only the agent—but on the Report of the Royal Commission by the British Government, with, I believe, the full concurrence of the nation,

for, whatever differences of opinion there may be on other questions, I have not yet heard that a policy of land settlement is disapproved of except by a few extremists.

Here, then, is this policy, adopted on the recommendation of a Royal Commission, instituted for the maintenance of our future power in South Africa, a policy, the progress of which has been steadily satisfactory, and which has been continued to a stage at which we have gained experience, and have learned, by such experience, how it may be carried on with greater advantage than it could be in the first necessary stage of experiment. Here, I say, is this policy in absolute jeopardy, and its future depends entirely on its being taken out of the hands of the new Government of the two colonies, and placed under independent management. The whole of our past efforts in that direction appear to my mind to be imperilled. But there is a higher obligation even than the maintenance of policy, and that is the obligation of honour. You may abandon that policy —though I should deeply regret it, and I know the nation would ultimately regret it—but you cannot abandon honour. After all the melancholy instances in South African history of vacillation on the part of this country, and the desertion of those who have staked their lives and fortunes on the continuance of a particular course, you cannot, surely, add another and one of the most disgraceful pages to the dark annals of our chopping and changing in South African policy.

It is said that if you were to place the land settlement fund, the lands which have been bought with it, and the tenants on those lands, under the control of a special Board appointed by the Imperial Government, it would be an interference with responsible government. I think that is an absolute misapprehension. We do not propose to interfere with the freedom of the legislatures of the new colonies, or to put any restriction upon the action of their executive governments. I should be the last to suggest such a thing. I say you cannot both grant responsible government and not grant it. You cannot say to these

colonies, 'Now you are free to manage your own affairs, but in this or that particular you must manage them in accordance with our wishes.' But what is there inconsistent with responsible government in retaining certain lands in the new colonies under a British Board responsible to the British Government? There would be no interference with the law of the colonies. These lands would be administered under the ordinary law. There would be no interference with the executive power. The executive power could do, as regards these settlers, exactly whatever it could do with regard to any other occupiers of land. But it seems to me that an immense protection would nevertheless be afforded to these settlers, and it is the only protection they ask for—the protection of a sympathetic landlord. That is their point. It is not that they want any privilege. They are at present the tenants of a body which is doing all it can to help them, and to give reasonable consideration to their difficulties, and they want to continue the tenants of a sympathetic landlord.

Does anybody say it is an interference with responsible government for the British Government to own land in a British colony? The Cape Colony has been under responsible government for thirty-four years, yet the British Admiralty is the owner of enormously valuable land in the Cape Colony, and the British War Office is the owner of valuable land in all the colonies of South Africa. Has it ever occurred to anybody to say that the ownership of land in a British colony by the British Government, or by a Board dependent on the British Government, is an interference with responsible government? It is a misunderstanding of our proposal to suppose that we desire any interference with responsible government at all.

I hope the House will pardon me if I refer to one more point, because I am certain that it will be brought up. It may be said, 'That is all very well. But this particular land is land which has been bought with money which the Colonies have borrowed, and on which the Colonies are paying interest; and that makes all the difference.' I

fully admit that this is the case, but I say that it does not in the least alter the fact that the Imperial Government would be perfectly justified in keeping that money and land under its own control. After all, these £3,000,000 are the only money out of all the millions that we have spent upon South Africa in which the people of this country, and the people of the British Colonies who have helped us, have any direct interest whatever.

We gave a free grant of £3,000,000 under the Treaty of Vereeniging. Directly afterwards there was a further grant of £2,000,000 to the so-called 'protected' burghers, and there was another grant of £2,000,000 for compensation to British and neutral subjects, who had suffered during the war. That was a clear £7,000,000 out of the Imperial Exchequer. In addition to that, the whole of the £35,000,000 loan, out of which these £3,000,000 would, according to our proposal, be taken, has been guaranteed by the British Government. If it had not been for that guarantee, the two colonies could not have raised a penny of it. Whatever money they did raise would have cost them at least four per cent. The mere fact of our giving that guarantee has saved the Colonies £350,000 a year in interest. Therefore, apart from the three grants I have mentioned, apart from our claim for many millions of war contribution from the Transvaal and our contingent claim on the Orange River Colony, if there had been no financial transaction at all, except this guaranteed loan of £35,000,000, we should still have afforded the Colonies ample compensation for taking £3,000,000 out of that loan for Imperial purposes, which, moreover, are not purposes in which the Colonies have no interest at all. If we took £3,000,000 to spend them in Great Britain, it would be a different matter; but we propose to take these £3,000,000, not to spend out of the Colonies, but to spend in the Colonies, and all we ask is that they should be kept under Imperial control. Indeed we are almost bound so to keep them, owing to the fact that these £3,000,000 were allocated for land settlement in the new colonies in the Act of this Parliament, confirming the

guarantee of the loan, and this was one of the chief inducements offered to Parliament to give that guarantee at all. It would be a breach of that understanding, if we allowed any part of this money to be diverted from the purposes for which it was ear-marked in the Guaranteed Loan Act, and how can we ensure its not being diverted, if it passes under the control of the two new colonial governments, one of which at any rate is bound to be hostile to the policy of settlement? For these reasons I hold that, although there are no doubt difficulties standing in the way of any arrangement which would give the settlers protection, by placing them under the control of an Imperial Board, those difficulties are by no means insuperable. In the interests of the great policy of land settlement, or even if you reject that entirely, then, at least in the interests of British honour, I beg to make this last fervent appeal to His Majesty's Government to save us from a discreditable solution of this question.

## MANCHESTER.—December 14, 1906

### *The Imperialist Creed*

[The following speech, the first to be delivered by Lord Milner under the auspices of a Unionist political organisation, was given at a meeting arranged by the Manchester Conservative Club]:—

When I was first invited to address the Unionists of Manchester, I felt very great hesitation, not because I did not deeply appreciate the honour of such a reception as this, but because I doubted, as indeed I still doubt, whether I had anything to offer you in return at all worthy of your acceptance. The date of this meeting, as I foresaw, was one at which the flames of party warfare would be burning fiercely, and in devoting an evening to public affairs you would naturally expect a speech dealing with the principal topics of current controversy. For that I knew that I was quite unfitted. I neither occupy nor aspire to a place among party leaders, indeed I am not very much of a party man. On many of the questions at present greatly agitat-

ing the public mind I have no claim whatever to speak with authority. In twenty years of public service, spent mainly, but not exclusively, under Unionist Governments, my mind has been absorbed in questions on which opinion often is not, and certainly never ought to be, divided on ordinary party lines, and which, though they may from time to time become subjects of party controversy, are of a nature peculiarly ill-adapted to such treatment. Indeed I may say that of the particular problems with which, as a public servant, I have had any special acquaintance, there is not one upon the solution of which the intrusion of party considerations, when they have intruded, has not exercised an influence injurious to the national interest. I could give a score of instances, I could write a whole book, to illustrate this proposition. And that being my feeling and profound conviction, I am determined, as far as lies in my power, to do nothing to aggravate the evil, and in dealing with those public questions, on which alone I am competent to speak, to avoid, even at the risk of being very dull, a style and manner of treatment which would inevitably predispose at least half the nation to turn a deaf ear to anything I might have to say.

And for this reason I do not propose to deal to-night at any length with South Africa. Indeed, in my desire to be unpolemical, I intended to give that subject the go-by altogether. But the publication of the Letters-Patent yesterday has made absolute silence impossible. It might be interpreted as acquiescence. And in a sense I do acquiesce. I bow to fate. Nothing is more repugnant to me than to go on bewailing evils which I am powerless to exorcise. But I retract none of my criticisms of the policy of which the Letters-Patent are the embodiment. As for the Letters-Patent themselves, they contain nothing which, having regard to past declarations of the Government, can be regarded as a surprise. In one respect they are welcome. I refer to the provisions creating a temporary Land Settlement Board in the Transvaal Colony. The policy of land settlement no doubt is knocked on the head

—a fact deeply to be regretted. But existing settlers at least are to receive some measure of protection. And as this precedent will no doubt be followed in the case of the Orange River Colony, it is not without importance, not so much from the political as from the moral point of view. To have left the settlers entirely in the lurch would have been a deep stain on the honour of the British Government; and great credit is due to those supporters of the Ministry whose action has no doubt been instrumental in averting it. But in other respects the document makes all the mischief which we were led to expect. More harm than good must have resulted in any case from the premature introduction of responsible government—that is party government—into either of the new colonies, though, no doubt, under ordinary circumstances it would have been fraught with less danger in the Transvaal than in the Orange River Colony. Indeed, whatever its dangers in the Transvaal, it would, if honestly carried out, have had one great compensating advantage. The labour question, which is the one question of absolutely vital importance to that colony at the present time, would have been removed from the devastating interference of the House of Commons, and left to be settled by the people on the spot, who are most deeply concerned, who know the facts, and whose morality, if not perhaps of quite the same high type as that exhibited in the slavery posters of the general election, or the use recently made of Mr. Bucknill's report, is still, as I know from living among them, quite equal to the average morality of their fellow-citizens in this country. To have left the people of the Transvaal free to settle this question for themselves, as the Ministry originally intended, would have been to carry out the principle of self-government. But instead of that, the question is first settled, or rather unsettled, for them, in the Letters-Patent, by the complete destruction of the existing system; and the brand-new Legislature is then called upon, in the very first days of its existence, to deal with the resulting chaos, with the agreeable consciousness that whatever it decides is liable

to be vetoed by the Government at home. Arbitrariness and inconsistency could no further go, and Heaven alone knows what will be the end of it. My only hope is that the very desperateness of the situation may have a sobering effect on Transvaal politicians, and that, in face of the economic catastrophe with which the colony is threatened, a great many people may be disposed to sink differences on other points, and to agree on some arrangement which will at least tide them over the next year or two, and which, with a strong body of colonial opinion behind it, the British Government would hesitate to reject.

It is with real relief that I turn from this distressing subject to the topics on which I came here to address you. They are, as I have said, topics very far removed from those which at present fill the political columns of all the newspapers. And for that reason, when first invited to come here, I strongly demurred, insisting that a speech from me could not in the present state of affairs be a particularly acceptable dish to set before the Unionists of Manchester, or, indeed, before any political assembly. But those who gave the invitation urged with equal strength and great persistence that I was quite wrong in that view, and that nobody expected me to make a regulation party speech. And so here I am ; and if at the end of it all you think you have made a bad bargain, I hope you will not visit it upon my innocent self, but will settle accounts with my friend, Lord Newton, and the other gentlemen who, with their eyes open, entered into that bargain on your behalf.

And now, gentlemen, without more ado, let me say that I have come to break a lance in favour of that school of thought which holds that the maintenance and consolidation of what we call the British Empire should be the first and the highest of all political objects for every subject of the Crown. People who know more about such things than I do, tell me that it is not much use talking in that strain just now. 'Imperialism as a political cry,' so an expert electioneerer said to me not long ago, 'is as dead as Queen Anne.' Well, but to some of us it is not a cry, but

a creed. To tell people in that frame of mind, that what they believe to be vital truth is unpopular, may certainly depress them very much. It does depress me. But it is not likely to induce them to abjure it. On the contrary, the more what they believe to be truth is obscured the more they will be impelled to try and relume it, or, if they cannot do that, at least to show forth their own unshaken faith in it in its eclipse. And they will continue to hope that that eclipse is only temporary, especially if they think as I do, that it is due almost entirely to a misunderstanding.

For what is it that we are told has turned aside the thoughts and affections of men from this dream, this mirage, or, to use an even more opprobrious epithet, this fetish of Imperialism? It is the growth of interest in what is known as social reform. Social reform! I take that to mean the movement, long since potent and no doubt of growing strength, which seeks to employ the resources and energies of the State in ameliorating the condition of the mass of the people, in raising their material, intellectual, moral standard of life, in giving even the humblest cause to rejoice in his birthright as a British citizen. And that, beyond all doubt or question, is a noble ideal. All of us must sympathise with it. I for one, not being and never having been a votary of *laisser faire*, not only sympathise with it, but believe that the action of the State can do a great deal to promote it. And I would rather see statesmen make many mistakes, as they will make mistakes, in their efforts to attain that end, than shrink from such efforts because of the pitfalls which beset them. Yes. By all means social reform. But where is the antagonism between it and Imperialism? To my mind they are inseparable ideals, absolutely interdependent and complementary to one another. How are you going to sustain this vast fabric of the Empire? No single class can sustain it. It needs the strength of the whole people. You must have soundness at the core—health, intelligence, industry; and these cannot be general without a fair

average standard of material well-being. Poverty, degradation, physical degeneracy,—these will always be. But can any patriot, above all can any Imperialist, rest content with our present record in these respects ? If he cares for the Empire, he must care that the heart of the Empire should beat with a sounder and less feverish pulse.

But, on the other hand, what is going to become of all your social well-being if the material prosperity which is essential to it, though not identical with it, is undermined ? And you cannot have prosperity without power, you, of all peoples, dependent for your very life, not on the products of these islands alone, but on a world-wide enterprise and commerce. This country must remain a great Power or she will become a poor country ; and those who in seeking, as they are most right to seek, social improvement are tempted to neglect national strength, are simply building their house upon the sand. ' These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.' But greatness is relative. Physical limitations alone forbid that these islands by themselves should retain the same relative importance among the vast empires of the modern world which they held in the days of smaller states—before the growth of Russia and the United States, before united Germany made those giant strides in prosperity and commerce which have been the direct result of the development of her military and naval strength. These islands by themselves cannot always remain a Power of the very first rank. But Greater Britain may remain such a Power, humanly speaking, for ever, and by so remaining, will ensure the safety and the prosperity of all the states composing it, which, again humanly speaking, nothing else can equally ensure. That surely is an object which in its magnitude, in its direct importance to the welfare of many generations, millions upon millions of human beings, is out of all proportion to the ordinary objects of political endeavour.

But it is not going to be attained easily. It is not going to come of itself. That at least is my firm conviction. And it is at this point that I enter upon ground which is,

perhaps, more controversial than that which I have just been traversing. There are many who think, and I desire to speak with all respect of their opinion, that, while the continued union and co-operation of the various states of the Empire is no doubt highly desirable, constructive statesmanship can do nothing to promote it, that it is even dangerous to make the attempt, and that we ought to confine ourselves to the cultivation of friendly sentiments, to the development of intercourse, better means of communication, greater postal and telegraphic facilities, and other such non-political means of promoting intimacy and good understanding. And certainly these are all highly important, and, indeed, essential, to the end which we have in view. But then these are all things which we should desire, even in the case of foreign nations. And here we come to a vital difference of view. Is our attitude to the other states of the Empire to be just that which we ought to adopt towards any friendly foreign nation, or are we to aim at something much closer and more intimate? For us Imperialists there can be no doubt about the answer. We are not content—this is the real point—that our relations with the other states of the Empire, or their relations with one another, should gradually slide into the position which would satisfy us if they were friendly foreign nations. Their peoples are not foreigners to us, or to one another, but fellow-citizens; and such we want them to remain. One throne, one flag, one citizenship. These are existing links of inestimable value. No friendship, no alliance even, with foreign countries, however strong, can give you anything to compare with them—any ties with roots so deep, with a vitality so enduring, or with results so precious.

Just think what it means, for at least every white man of British birth, that he can be at home in every state of the Empire from the moment he sets foot in it, though his whole previous life may have been passed at the other end of the earth. He hears men speaking his own language, he breathes a social and moral atmosphere which is familiar to him—not the same, no doubt, as that of his old home,

but yet a kindred atmosphere. More than that, he is entitled to full rights of citizenship from the very outset. He is on absolute terms of equality in this respect with the native born. The born Australian or New Zealander needs no naturalisation in Great Britain. The born Briton needs none in Australia or New Zealand; whereas in any foreign country, however friendly, the Briton, the Australian, the New Zealander would all alike be aliens for years. I doubt whether people in general at all realise the greatness of this birthright, the scope and range, the variety and wealth of opportunities, which it affords to us to-day, and may, if we have the wisdom to preserve it, afford to those who come after us for centuries. Our common citizenship is one of those great familiar blessings which men are apt to realise only when they have lost them.

I say, then, that we Imperialists are not content to slide into a position in which the several states of the Empire—I am, of course, now speaking of the self-governing states—will be to one another just like so many foreign nations however friendly. But we shall so slide, must so slide, in my opinion, unless a far-sighted statesmanship, availing itself of the still intensely strong, and, indeed, I hope growing, desire for Imperial unity, can devise means to counteract the forces—great natural forces, not certainly insuperable, but very formidable—which make silently, constantly, for disintegration. Remember what the great self-governing colonies are to-day—either already are, or are fast becoming. They are no longer colonies in the ordinary sense of the term, but nations, with a life, a pride, a consciousness of their own, with separate, divergent, and in some cases indeed conflicting interests. It may be true—it is true—that they have a great common interest in keeping together, which transcends all the interests that tend to divide. But it needs exceptional imagination to grasp, and a resolute purpose to hold on to, that idea. I know there are many who think—I wish I could agree with them—that the tie of sentiment alone is sufficient to hold our Empire together. And certain it is that without that

foundation to build upon you could do nothing. Without the sentiment of unity there can be no union; but the sentiment alone does not constitute a practical and effective union. It only makes one possible. It is, so to speak, the material, the indispensable material which statesmen may work up into the fabric which we want, that is to say, into a real political organism, which will be permanent and capable of bearing the strains to which from time to time it is certain to be exposed. But by itself it is just loose, uncompacted material. Why, even the United States of America, states with every tie of sentiment to draw them together, states, moreover, so much closer to, so much more obviously dependent on one another than the scattered communities of the British Empire, would never have been the great nation we see, or one nation at all, if statesmen had not been found of exceptional ability and power, who at the critical moment could 'take occasion by the hand,' and weld together what nature no doubt intended to be, but what it required human wisdom and energy to make, one body-politic.

These are sobering reflections. But do not think that I am seeking to paint the future unduly black. It is a common trick of speakers, especially Opposition speakers, to conjure up a great impending national calamity and to suggest that unless something tremendous is done at once—the something generally being to turn out the Government—all is lost. The calamity I foresee is the gradual drifting apart of the scattered states of the Empire. But I do not suggest that any great rupture is imminent, or that one immediate exceptional step is necessary to prevent it. All I say is that we cannot afford to go on missing opportunities of strengthening old links or forging new ones, to arrest that process of dissolution of the whole, which is a natural though by no means unavoidable result of the independent development of the parts. We have lost far too many such opportunities already. But lest I should seem in saying that to adopt a superior or a lecturing tone, let me hasten to add that I have myself been a sinner in this

respect, and with very little excuse for sinning. I shall never forgive myself for not suggesting—I do not know that the suggestion would have been adopted, or even welcomed, but at any rate it was my business to make it—that in the settlement of South African affairs after the war every important step taken by us should be taken in consultation with the other colonies. It was by their efforts as well as ours that South Africa was kept within the Empire, and the subsequent policy was a clear case for Imperial co-operation. Not that I would for one moment suggest that the states of the Empire should take to meddling in one another's affairs. Non-interference in one another's domestic affairs is as fundamental a principle of Imperialism, as we understand it, as effective co-operation in our common affairs. The federated South Africa of the future ought, I suppose we are all agreed, to be as free and unhampered as Canada, or Australia, or New Zealand. But while South Africa or any part of it was under temporary tutelage, the tutelage should have been really Imperial and not merely British. The ward should have been the ward of the family, not merely of the Mother Country.

That was an opportunity lost, and there have been other lost opportunities. But it will not do to go on losing them. Every chance missed makes it more difficult to seize the next one. And now, as it happens, there is a very important chance immediately ahead of us. A few months hence, the Prime Ministers of all the self-governing colonies will meet in conclave in this country. What use is going to be made of that momentous occasion? Let us hope, to begin with that, to mark the real nature of the gathering, the Prime Minister of Great Britain will preside over its deliberations as *primus inter pares*. Such an innovation would imply no disparagement to the high office of Colonial Secretary. The Colonial Office exercises enormous powers and rules over a very large portion of the earth's surface. But the self-governing colonies are no longer, in anything but in name, under the Colonial Office, or, indeed, under

any British authority except the King. They are, in fact, states of the Empire, and the United Kingdom itself is such a state, though no doubt still vastly the greatest and most important, bearing almost all the common burdens, and alone responsible for the great dependencies. Still, the difference between the United Kingdom and the other states, in the view of the Imperialism of the future, of the only Imperialism that can stand, ought to be regarded as a difference of stature and not of status—a difference which, however great to-day, must tend to disappear.

This point of form, therefore, is important; but, of course, the substance of the deliberations is far more so. In some respects the meeting is not held under the most favourable auspices. The great statesman who has done more than any man living to found the Imperialism of the future, to familiarise men both at home and in the Colonies with the idea of Imperial partnership, is temporarily withdrawn from the political arena. He will soon be back, as we all hope, with renewed vigour, but even his temporary absence is an immense loss. He could not, in any case, under present conditions, have taken part in the actual Conference, but his active presence in political life before it and during it would, nevertheless, have exercised an invaluable influence in the direction of putting all its members upon their mettle. And then, again, there is the awkward fact that the very thing which the colonial representatives will be most anxious to discuss is just what the British representatives must feel the greatest embarrassment in discussing. We know what colonial Imperialists, almost without exception, regard as the most important practical step towards closer union. They believe in the principle of preferential trade, of the members of the Imperial family dealing with one another on terms more favourable than those accorded to strangers. At the last Conference in 1902, the colonial Premiers unanimously supported a resolution in favour of a system of reciprocal preferential treatment of products and manufactures within the Empire in respect of Customs duties.

Since then Canada has continued, and South Africa has accorded, preference to the Mother Country, and Australia is trying to follow in the same direction. And in the absence of any response from the Mother Country, the Colonies are beginning to practise preference among themselves. Under these circumstances it is mere trifling to question what is the prevalent desire of the Colonies in this matter. If it were not for reluctance on our part, reciprocal preferential treatment would rapidly become the rule throughout the Empire.

It is Great Britain which in this particular blocks the way. But is it necessary that she should continue to block it as hopelessly as she at present does, even under existing conditions? I dare say we shall, but I do not for a moment admit that we must. It is quite possible, as it seems to me, even for the present British Government to take up a less rigid attitude on this question than it has hitherto done. And surely, whatever may be our view about the principle of preference itself, we should all admit that it is at least unfortunate that Great Britain should be in this position of rejecting advances made to her by the Colonies, in what they believe to be our as well as their interest, and that no British Government would be justified in adopting in such a matter an attitude more unsympathetic than that of the nation behind it. Granted that the Government would be justified in saying to the Colonies that the people of these islands, as at present advised, were not prepared to consider any further taxation of the necessaries of life, or even any readjustment of such taxation of them as already exists, whatever compensating advantage they might receive for it. That would, in my opinion, be nothing more than the truth, however unfortunate. But if they were to draw from that fact, as many of their supporters seem to do, the inference that the people of these islands were averse to any idea of preferential trade relations between the different parts of the Empire, I absolutely deny that the British people have ever decided anything of the kind, or that, apart from the

particular proposal of a tax on corn, they have ever even considered it.

And it makes a world of difference, whether we appear to the Colonies as rejecting the brotherly principle of preferential trade altogether, or simply as having rejected a particular form of tariff. They have surely made it perfectly clear that they have no desire whatever to dictate to us about our tariff, no wish that we should make any sacrifice of our own interests merely in order to give them preference. They all fix their tariffs in the first place to suit their own interests, and they expect us to do the same. But though they think of themselves first, they think of the other members of the family second, and of the rest of the world third. And if we are indeed a family, is not that simply natural and right? And when have the people of this country rejected that point of view?

It may be said, 'What practical difference does it make, whether we reject it or not, since we have no tariff which would enable us to differentiate in favour of colonial imports, even if we wanted to?' Well, in the first place, that is not quite true. There are articles, even in our present restricted list of dutiable imports, on which we might discriminate in favour of the Colonies. The immediate practical consequences would be slight, but the effect on the Colonies and on their future attitude towards us in the matter would be momentous. And then, again, is there any man who is hardy enough to say that, even if preferential trade did not enter into the question at all, our present list of dutiable imports is to be regarded as immutable, eternal? Have we, indeed, attained the highest plane of human wisdom in this respect? Some of us may think so, but a good many of us do not. And in any case, the Colonies do not think so. They believe that in our own interest we are certain in the course of time to modify our commercial policy and to modify it in a manner which would leave far more scope for the application of the principle of preferential trade than the present system does. And, remember, that principle can find expression in other

things besides tariffs. The question is, whether we have any sympathy with the principle at all or not. If all we say to the Colonies now, is simply that we do not see our way at present to reciprocal arrangements, that it would cause too great an upset of our own trade—mind you, I do not agree with all this ; I am only trying to put myself into the position of a free importer who yet does not want to douche the Colonies with the coldest of cold water—if we leave the door open for further consideration, such an answer might no doubt be discouraging, but I do not believe for a moment that it would deter the Colonies from continuing to give a preference to British goods. They would still have confidence in the future, and would be wise to have it. But if, on the other hand, we say to them :—' Go your way. We love you very much, but do not suppose that we will ever dream of having closer relations with you than with other people. We object in principle to all such sordid bonds '—if we say that, we may kill the preferential trade movement in the Colonies as far as we are concerned, and a great deal else with it. And, more than that, we shall not have long to wait before other nations will approach them and try to arrange for the reciprocal advantages which we have rejected. But once let foreign goods be introduced into a British colony on terms more favourable than British goods of the same kind, and you get a state of things so unnatural, so conducive to estrangement if not to friction, that it makes closer union in other respects infinitely more difficult and probably impossible. I do not say that other bonds of Empire might not for a time resist even that strain, but it would be a fatal blunder to expose them to it.

And now, passing from the trade question, about which our attitude at the Conference may be more or less discouraging, but cannot in any case give the Colonies much satisfaction, may we venture to hope that it is not going to be the same story about all the topics of discussion ? ' There is some soul of goodness in things evil,' and the very fact that our present Ministry are bound to be more or less of a wet blanket to colonial aspirations, with regard

to preference, must surely make them all the keener to arrive at some practical results in other directions. They cannot wish the Conference altogether to fail, to be productive of nothing more than platitudes and evening parties. They must realise how poor a figure they would cut, how deep a disappointment such a result would be to at least a great majority of the nation.

And now I have trespassed so long upon your patience this evening, that I really dare not go in detail into those other matters, some of them of far-reaching importance, which the Conference will have to discuss. But there is one question standing out with peculiar prominence, to which in conclusion I should like very briefly to call your attention. It is the question of the future of the Colonial Conference itself. The Conference, while it lasts, is an extraordinarily important assembly. Consisting as it does of representative members, usually the heads, of the executives of all the self-governing states of the Empire, deriving their power directly from the popular will, it may be said that, while it sits, the people of the Empire are themselves in conclave. During that brief period we actually have what our loosely knit Imperial system so sorely needs, a body representative of all the autonomous communities which own allegiance to the Crown. The so-called Imperial Parliament, elected only by the people of these islands, is not such a body. Our own Ministry, responsible only to that Parliament, is not such a body. But the Conference is. No doubt it is only a consultative body, though from its composition it is a peculiarly weighty one. But people must consult together before they can be expected to act together. It would be an immense step in advance if we could only establish the regular practice of common consultation, with regard to all matters of common interest, and I include among matters of common interest any question arising between one state of the Empire and a foreign state.

But the Conference only sits for a brief period at long intervals. During all the intervening time, the peoples

of the Empire have no common organ. And in the absence of such an organ, matters of common interest are neglected, or casually and fragmentarily dealt with. And when a question arises between a colony and a foreign state, there is no means of taking the general sense of the Empire upon it. There is not even any regular system for dealing with it in conjunction with the colony directly affected. We have had an extraordinary instance of this want of touch in the recent case of Newfoundland. In such a case, under present circumstances, the British Government has just to do the best it can, consulting whom it pleases, as it pleases. That is a very unsatisfactory position. No doubt there is this amount of justification for it, that Great Britain has to bear the whole brunt of any difficulties that might arise with the foreign Power. But then that itself is a result of our present happy-go-lucky system. Once establish the principle of common deliberation about external affairs, or even only about external affairs directly affecting one or more of the Colonies, and you are bound to face the problem of what I may call mutual insurance. The Colonies, I take it, are becoming alive to the duty of developing their means of self-defence. That is, in the long run, a much better plan than offering money contributions to the mother country, however welcome these may be in the absence of anything better. But, without a common understanding, or any arrangement for mutual help, colonial defence forces may become a burden out of all proportion to their utility. The whole matter needs to be thoroughly and systematically thought out, and so you come round again to the primary need—that of constantly taking counsel together.

Look at it from any point of view, and the duty of common consultation appears to grow more and more imperative. And the problem is, how the opportunity for such consultation, which the Conference affords, can be kept alive when the Conference is not sitting. The late Colonial Secretary made a suggestion how that might to some extent be done. His suggestion was that there should

be a permanent Commission springing out of the Conference, a Commission representative of all the states of the Empire, which, in the intervals between the meetings of the Conference, should examine and report on any questions of common interest, with a view to their ultimate decision by the Conference itself. It was to be a sort of Intelligence Department for the civil business of the Empire. Now that by itself would not be a very momentous step, but it would be a step entirely in the right direction. And, on the whole, the suggestion was cordially welcomed by the self-governing colonies. Newfoundland and Canada, indeed, showed some hesitation about adopting it. But the objections of Newfoundland were clearly based on a misunderstanding, and the Government of Canada, though not prepared to commit itself without further consideration, did not show any hostility to the proposal. The impression which its answer gives is that it has an open mind on the subject. And I do not think that the Government of Canada, which in the question of preferential trade has led the way, would wish to be a drag on the coach with regard to any proposal making for Imperial co-operation, if it were satisfied that the other self-governing colonies approved it. Certainly I do not believe that that would be the desire of the Canadian people.

If I have dwelt at length upon the approaching Conference, it is because of the intense anxiety which all Imperialists must feel, that one of these great, rarely occurring, opportunities should be utilised to the full. Unless the public, both here and in the Colonies, are aroused to a vivid interest in the subject, timidity and *vis inertiæ* may prevail. The danger besetting the cause of Imperial unity is not so much that men are, in the abstract, hostile to the idea ; but it is apt to appear something academic, distant, unreal, the very reverse of what in truth it is, a matter of direct personal importance to the humblest citizen. I cannot flatter myself that anything I have said to-night will do much to bring home the conviction of this fact to those who do not already feel it. But I have at least tried to state the

case simply, honestly, without personal or party animus, without rhetorical artifice, and without exaggeration. Empire and Imperialism are words which lend themselves to much misuse. It is only when stripped of tawdry accessories that the ideas which they imperfectly express can be seen in their real greatness. Our object is not domination or aggrandisement. It is consolidation and security. We envy and antagonise no other nation. But we wish the kindred peoples under the British flag to remain one united family for ever. And we believe that it is only by such union that they can attain their highest individual development, and exercise a decisive influence for peace, and for the maintenance of that type of civilisation which they all have in common, in the future history of the human race.

## WOLVERHAMPTON.—DECEMBER 17, 1906

### *A political Ishmaelite*

[At this time Mr. L. S. Amery, M.P.—since 1911—for South Birmingham, was prospective candidate for East Wolverhampton, and it was at his instance that Lord Milner visited Wolverhampton and delivered the following address to a Unionist audience]:—

I AM going to do a bold thing. I am not going to address you to-night about any of those subjects on which you are probably expecting me to address you—the religious controversy with regard to our schools, plural voting, trade disputes, the position of the House of Lords. Not that I do not recognise their importance. But there are plenty of people to speak about them, and people far more competent than I am. The great statesmen of the day are necessarily absorbed in those questions, which hold the field for the time being in political life, and between them they are more than able to put every possible point of view before the public. I think it is more useful for an outsider like myself—an old public servant and deeply interested in public affairs, but with no pretensions to be a political leader—to devote himself to other matters, also important, but which for the moment are, more or less, in the back-

ground. They are questions which at all times are worthy of some share of your attention, and perhaps they can be most profitably considered when they are not among the immediate burning topics of party controversy.

But you may perhaps be inclined to say to me, 'That is all very well. But from what point of view are you approaching them? What are you? Show us your colours.' Well, gentlemen, I am a free lance, a sort of political Ishmaelite, who has found hospitality in the Unionist camp. It is certain that I could not have found it in any other. Not that I am not good friends with many Liberals, and even in agreement with them on some political questions. But I am simply anathema to a large section of the party in power, which indeed seems to be the dominant section. True, they are not altogether agreed among themselves. Some are Individualists and some are Socialists, some are religious men of a very militant type, and some indifferent to every form of religion. But there is one point which they almost all have in common, and that is a certain suspicion—perhaps it would be too much to say dislike—of the Empire, because they connect it with the idea of war, and the necessity of maintaining an army and navy, and the training of our youth to the use of arms, which, as some of them have recently informed us, develops 'the animal instincts.' For my own part, I should have thought that nothing developed those instincts in our growing youth so much as loafing, and nothing subdued them so much as hard and continuous exercise and moral discipline. But that by the way. Certainly there is no blinking the fact that, if you have an Empire, you may have to fight for it; and that, as you may have to fight, you had better know how to; and if you think that that is bad for you, you had better not set too much store by the Empire, or for the matter of that even by 'Little England,' which might need a lot of fighting for without the Empire, but go in frankly for internationalism at once. Now that is not my point of view at all. Indeed, I fear that to those who think with Lord Courtney that 'the devil was the arch-Imperialist,' I can only appear as

a child of the devil. And so you see that, unless the Unionist party were good enough to shelter so dangerous a character, I should be an outcast altogether. But the last thing I should dream of doing would be to repay their hospitality by attempting to commit them to all my eccentric opinions. I know that I am a hopeless detrimental from the party point of view. By all means continue to be kind to me. Charity is good for the soul. And there can be no harm done by listening to me from time to time. I have had some experience, and I have no axe to grind whatsoever. But it is quite a different thing to ask you to adopt my views as part of a party gospel. I make no claims of that kind. Individually they may, I hope, commend themselves to some, and indeed to many, Unionists, and perhaps not only to Unionists. But collectively they would give any party manager a fit.

For just think of it! Not only am I an Imperialist of the deepest dye—and Imperialism, you know, is out of fashion—but I actually believe in universal military training. I have been an accomplice of Lord Roberts in his attempt to persuade his countrymen not to rely entirely upon paying a small portion of their number to fight for the rest, but to establish our national security upon a broader basis, and one, if I may say it without offence, more compatible with self-respect. I agree with all that Mr. Haldane and Lord Rosebery have recently said, and said much better than I can, about 'a nation in arms,' and the duty of every man to be ready to defend his country. But I go one step further than they do. I cannot for the life of me see, if this really is the duty of every man and a duty of supreme importance to the State, why the performance of that duty should be left quite optional, when the discharge of so many minor public duties is not left so, without any reasonable creature making a grievance of that fact. Either this great second line of defence, this national reservoir of men, is a vital public necessity, or it is not. If it is not, then why make all this enormous fuss about it and spend so much money upon a luxury? If it is, how extraordinary to leave it to chance, to individual preference or conveni-

ence, to decide whether you get it or not? A good deal of prejudice is always excited on this subject, by the assumption that those who think as I do want to introduce the German military system. But, judging from myself, they want nothing of the kind. All the conditions are radically different in the two countries. Indeed, I do not believe in slavishly following any foreign model. We have got to make our own model, to develop on our own national lines. We are not going to throw our Army, Militia, Yeomanry, Volunteers upon the scrap-heap. Without entering upon military details, for which I am not competent, I should say simplify, consolidate, but do not destroy. But, above all, have one period of military training for men of all classes, on the threshold of manhood, which should be regarded as part of the education of the citizen, and would give you the material alike for your small professional army, which would still be voluntarily recruited, and for that great National Reserve, however organised, on the necessity of which every expert, as far as I know, is agreed.

Of course, something more is wanted than the agreement of experts. The body of the nation must be convinced. Without a belief in its necessity they would never face an undertaking so large and which looks so irksome. But to admit that, is not to admit that it really is the burden and the drawback which it is commonly represented to be. I believe it to be a blessing in disguise. Not a few of us have seen with their bodily eyes what it has done for some foreign nations. And no nation requires it more than one living so largely in crowded industrial centres as ours. You may say physical training would do all that is required. But mere physical training, directed to no particular object, is difficult and almost impossible to make general and thorough. And there is a great deal more in this proposal than mere bodily exercise. The 'nation in arms' is a great school of patriotism. And military training is not a training wholly or mainly of the body. It develops moral qualities in the individual which are of the highest value to him all his life, of value to him as a worker and of value to him as a citizen.

I know some people think that it would make us more prone to go to war. Personally I hold the exactly opposite opinion. Professional soldiers may sometimes wish for war. And an unmilitary mob does often clamour for it, from an unhealthy love of excitement, as for some gladiatorial show. They would feel very differently if they had themselves to be the gladiators. Wars among civilised nations are happily becoming, and likely to become, of rarer and rarer occurrence. And one of the reasons for this is, that the system of what may be called national militias has to so large an extent taken the place of the old professional armies. In a democratic State having a national militia, the men who decide upon a war are the same men who, or whose children, have got to wage it. They will think twice before they take the plunge. But other nations also will think twice before they quarrel with them. Our fellow-citizens in other parts of the Empire, and especially Australia, perhaps the most democratic of British countries, seem to be realising these facts. I see that a 'citizen defence force' forms one of the planks in the platform of the Australian Labour Party. And that seems a logical and consistent development of democratic principles.

And now, to go on with the list of my heresies, let me say that I am a Tariff Reformer, and one of a somewhat pronounced type. At the same time I feel that this is a controversy which calls for a great deal of mutual forbearance from those who differ about it but are otherwise politically agreed. Take my own case. For many years of my life I held what is known as the Cobdenite doctrine in all its rigidity. Experience of public finance, in more countries than one, gradually detached me from it, and had so detached me some time before this question became a burning one in politics. But I am not the least surprised that many of my friends, especially those who have not had a similar experience, still cling to the old faith which we once held in common. I decline to quarrel with them. I only wish they would not quarrel with me, or be so very positive.

The effect of a duty on imported goods in all its ramifications is one of the most complicated intellectual problems that I know of. If I find any man dogmatising about it with absolute omniscience, I think him a quack. And I do not want to dogmatise too much myself. But I may be permitted, very briefly, to put before you what, from a practical point of view, seems a reasonable plan, without entering into the abstruse economic arguments in favour of it, which would take me hours.

I believe that duties on imported goods are a sound, as they are an almost universal, way of raising revenue. But if you have a tariff at all it should, to start with, be a moderate all-round one. Exemption should be, not the rule, but the exception. Where a good case can be made out for exemption, by all means accord it. There clearly is such a case, as it seems to me, for certain large classes of raw material. But, as a rule, I should be disposed to scrutinise very closely any demands for exemption. And, on the other hand, I should look askance at proposals to put really high rates on particular articles, rates having a deliberately protective or penal character. Here, again, no doubt a case can be made out. If a home industry is being crushed by competition which is really unfair, why should it seem so wicked to protect it? You say, 'Oh, but we get the goods cheaper.' But we have no right to profit by an injustice done to one class of producers, nor do we in the long run any of us profit by permitting it. Stolen goods are also cheap. Pirated books are cheap. Goods made in violation of a patent are cheap. The setting up of cheapness as the sole and final test is an anarchic principle.

But, as I have said, it needs a very strong case indeed, the unfairness must be very clear, its evil consequences must be very indisputable, before you sanction an exceptional rate for purposes of protection. No doubt any all-round tariff, however moderate, has a certain protective tendency; but that is a different matter. It has a general tendency to benefit all producer-consumers at the expense

of consumers who are not also producers. And it has a tendency to encourage the investment of capital at home instead of abroad, and to increase the output and keep up the spirits of home industry. But unless the thing is pushed too far, both these tendencies seem to me good.

Our present tariff, of course, is based on quite opposite principles. It is confined to very few articles. But on these articles it places duties, which are always heavy and sometimes perfectly enormous, as in the case of tobacco, against which it rages with peculiar fury. I must say I have a great sympathy with poor tobacco. I can see the reasons for tremendous duties on spirits, but not for this ferocious attack upon the innocent pipe. And at the same time this system lets off innumerable articles, many of them pure luxuries, which could perfectly well pay a moderate duty. The result is a most fantastic and unequal distribution of the burden, a distribution which is all in favour of the well-to-do. What distinguishes the consumption of a rich man from that of his poorer neighbours? Not so much the larger amount of certain articles of universal consumption that he consumes (he cannot drink so much more tea, or smoke so much more tobacco, however hard he tries), but the vastly greater range and variety of the articles which he consumes at all. By raising almost all our Customs revenue from a very few articles of universal consumption, which we tax enormously, rich and poor are made to contribute in nearly equal amounts, despite the great disparity of their resources. It is really a sort of graduation against the less well-to-do. A much lighter duty spread over a much larger number of articles would obviously be much fairer between rich and poor. All would still contribute, as all ought to contribute, but much more nearly in proportion to their means.

Indeed, it is often used as an argument for the introduction of novel, dubious, and oppressive taxes, aimed directly at the rich, that indirect taxation at present operates so unfairly. But would it not be much simpler to make it operate less unfairly? Why create a second inequality in

order to perpetuate the present one? The reason, of course, is that our present tariff is dominated, from start to finish, by one idea, and one idea only, and that is, that it is wicked to do anything which could by any possibility, even indirectly, give an advantage to the home producer. It is wicked to tax anything made by a foreigner unless you can also tax the same article made by an Englishman, Irishman, or Scotsman. If that is impracticable, then the tax on the foreign article, however reasonable in itself, must be abandoned. I say that is pedantry. It is no use belabouring me with theoretical arguments. The thing is irrational, and I do not believe it can permanently stand.

And such a change of policy as I have outlined would have two further consequences, both of momentous importance. In the first place, it would enable us to enter into a commercial union with other parts of the Empire, by giving them, as some of them have given us, not exemption from duties, but a lower rate. I do not say that a uniform lower rate exhausts the possibilities of preferential trade within the Empire, but at any rate it is a good basis to start from. And it embodies the sound principle that we are a nation within a nation, and that, while we are entitled to think first of ourselves, we should think next of our fellow-citizens across the seas, and only after them of foreign nations. And in the next place, a moderate general tariff would give us, almost insensibly, an enormous revenue, and I do not know how else you are going to get that on present lines. Some people think they are going to do wonders by a graduated income-tax. I can tell them that, however attractive it may be for purposes of demagogy, a graduated income-tax will, from the revenue point of view, prove a great disappointment. It is not the graduation I object to. But you already have a graduated and pretty steeply graduated death duty, and, whatever may be the objections to that tax, it does at least bring in a lot of money. But a graduated income-tax is only a new and less convenient method of drawing from the same source. It is not going to yield anything like the same sum, and it

is going to be much more expensive, inquisitorial, and vexatious. Realised wealth is not the inexhaustible milch cow that some people think.

Well, then, what remains? Economy? No doubt there is room—there always is—for saving on our public services. But even if you reduce waste to a *minimum*, the resultant saving will be all required for new needs. No doubt there is one kind of economy which might be, and perhaps is, being practised which would afford substantial relief to the Treasury—for a time—though we should have to pay heavily for it afterwards. I mean economy achieved by cutting down our defensive forces. You may have seen that latterly there has been some very strong criticism from very competent quarters of what is called the 'reorganisation' of the Navy. The burden of the charge is that the Government, while it claims to be saving money on the Navy by a better distribution of strength, is in reality saving it, or most of it, by the very simple device of reducing the fighting efficiency of the Fleet. Now I am not prepared to say that that is so. The Admiralty may have a good answer to its critics. But there certainly is a very strong and nasty-looking *prima facie* case which has got to be answered. And of this I am very sure, that, if the public were once convinced that the fighting strength of the Navy was being reduced, and, worse still, reduced in what one can only call a clandestine way, there would be a bigger storm than the advocates of economy at all hazards have any idea of.

On the whole, I think we had better make up our minds that there is nothing to be saved—nothing worth speaking of—on our defensive forces, though no doubt there is a good deal, especially in the case of the Army, which can be spent to better purpose than has been the case in the past. And, on the other hand, you have the constant growth of civil expenditure. There is simply no end to the schemes for improving the lot of the mass of the people by the expenditure of public money. No doubt many of them are very bad. But they are not all bad. For my own

part, I am unable to join in the hue and cry against Socialism. That there is an odious form of Socialism I admit, a Socialism which attacks wealth simply because it is wealth, and lives on the cultivation of class hatred. But that is not the whole story, most assuredly not. There is a nobler Socialism, which so far from springing from 'envy, hatred, and all uncharitableness,' is born of genuine sympathy and a lofty and wise conception of what is meant by national life. It realises the fact that we are not merely so many millions of individuals, each struggling for himself, with the State to act as policeman, but literally one body-politic; that the different classes and sections of the community are members of that body, and that when one member suffers all the members suffer. From this point of view the attempt to raise the well-being and efficiency of the more backward of our people—for this is what it all comes to—is not philanthropy: it is business. I dare say many of the ways in which enthusiasts try to achieve this end are mistaken and even ludicrous. I have heard of one progressive municipality in which they keep up billiard tables out of the rates. But, while trying to curb the excesses and absurdities of this spirit of social improvement, do not let us decry the spirit itself. There are a great many things, essential to the health and prosperity of the mass of the people, which public action, national or municipal, can alone secure, and they all mean money. No one can believe, for instance, that we have got to the end of our expenditure on education. And now that people's ideas of what education ought to be have become so much more enlightened, it is well that this should be the case. As long as we do not try merely to cram the memory, but to develop the power of observation and thought, to train body and mind together, and to direct work at school towards subsequent usefulness in life—I say as long as education is based on enlightened principles, we ought not to bewail the cost. And the same is true, of course, of anything that makes for the national health.

There are other forms of expenditure which are much

more questionable. Take such a thing, for instance, as old age pensions. They may be a necessity, but they are a deplorable necessity. The case for them rests on the fact that, owing to low wages and irregular employment, so many people really are unable to make provision for old age. I believe that is true; and that being true, it is not only more humane, it is from the national point of view more politic, not to condemn innocent poverty to the workhouse. But every wise man would rather strike at the causes of low wages and irregular employment than merely mitigate its effects. The necessity of old age pensions is a confession of national failure. It is due, in part at least, in great part, to the immense output of unskilled labour—boys and girls thrown upon the world to pick up a few shillings by casual work, without any special training or aptitude for anything. And is it not due also in great part to the want of protection—in the broadest sense of the word—of great national industries? I am not referring simply to protection by duties, though that may in some instances be necessary. The point is, that we should look at industry in a national spirit which aims at the *maximum* of production and employment, not in the purely commercial spirit which thinks of nothing but cheapness. The decline of any great industry within these islands is a national loss. It may in some cases be inevitable, but it ought never to be contemplated with indifference. It is surely better to pay a little more for your goods, and keep thousands of people in productive work, than to pay a little less for your goods, and have ultimately to devote what you have saved in that way to the relief of pauperism due to the loss of employment. I know the argument that, if you save money by the cheapening of one class of goods, that means that you have more money to spend on something else, and so there will be new industries and new employment. But will the new necessarily be as desirable as the old, and will the new necessarily be in this country? I am afraid I am not large-minded enough to be interested in the total wealth

of the world—even if I were sure, which I am not, that universal, unregulated competition was going to produce the greatest total wealth. My ideal is to see the greatest number of people living healthy and independent lives by means of productive work in our own country. And here indeed I touch the root of all these, as they may seem to you, disjointed and, as they certainly are in some respects, unfashionable opinions. In truth, whether right or wrong, they all hang together. I am not an individualist and I am not a cosmopolitan. The conception which haunts me is the conception of the people of these islands as a great family, bound by indissoluble ties to kindred families in other parts of the world, and, within its own borders, striving after all that makes for productive power, for social harmony, and, as a result of these and as the necessary complement and shield of these, for its strength as a nation among the nations of the earth.

CHURCH HOUSE, WESTMINSTER.—March 9, 1907

*South African Railway Mission*

[In presiding at the annual meeting of the South African Church Railway Mission.]

It is always a pleasure as well as a duty to me to do anything I can for South Africa. If there is one thing about which all who know South Africa are agreed, it is the importance of railways in the life of that country. In that land of immense distances and thinly scattered population, where centres of industry, absolutely dependent on each other, are often separated by hundreds of miles of almost wilderness, a railway is the artery of civilised life, not only sustaining it, but creating it, and often making the settlement which it is ultimately to serve. The railwaymen are the pioneers of European settlement. They are mostly of our own race, and very good specimens of the race too. Many forms of British enterprise in South Africa are, if not objects of hostility, subjects of controversy—railway development is not one of these. Everywhere the railwaymen are cordially welcomed. They

are doing a very great work for their country, and it is done often under arduous conditions. I am not thinking so much of health, though certain parts of the country are very unhealthy ; what they suffer from most, at least on the new and pioneer lines, is the loneliness and isolation. They are cut off to a great extent from intercourse with their fellow-countrymen and even with each other, and from the benefits of that civilisation which it is their duty to advance. And I maintain that all interested in South Africa are bound to repay the railway workers for what they are doing by giving them among other blessings of civilisation, everyday matters to us, the influence of religious intercourse and communion. Now that is the object of the Railway Mission ; and so far as my experience goes, that duty is admirably discharged. The hard work which men and women are doing in connection with the Mission, often amid discomfort and privation, is admirably done. Hard-working, devoted, manly and sensible, are the representatives of that Mission ; cordial is the welcome given them wherever they go. But the work is necessarily expensive. The governments of the Colonies do as much for it as can reasonably be expected. In the main, the work is supported by voluntary effort. Every year, hundreds of miles are added to the South African railway, and the Railway Mission's work ought to be extended at least as fast, and I hope that this meeting will enable the Mission to respond to the ever-growing need.

## KENSINGTON TOWN HALL.—MARCH 15, 1907

### *National Service*

[At a meeting of the Kensington branch of the National Service League.]

I DO not pretend to be a military expert. My adhesion to the principles of the National Service League is based on a few very simple considerations of a broad political and social order. I do not greatly care whether the Blue Water School or the critics of the Blue Water School get the best of the argument. Personally, I am inclined to

think that, at the present time at any rate, there is not much danger of an invasion of this country. I am not such an alarmist as—what shall I say ?—the editor of the *National Review*. But it is really appalling to think what even a trifling invasion, even a landing of ten thousand or five thousand men in this country in our present state of military unpreparedness would mean—the panic which it would cause, the absolute confusion into which everything would be thrown, the disorganisation of credit, the dislocation of all industry, which might well result in causing a loss in a few weeks far transcending the cost of general military training for many years. But a nation conscious of its power of defending itself could afford to treat such an invasion almost with contempt. My contention is, that we cannot stake our existence upon the theory—for after all it is nothing more than a theory—that invasion is absolutely and for all time impossible. One of the greatest of military thinkers has said that there is nothing certain about war except that it will be full of surprises. Now, if it is impossible even for the greatest strategist to foresee the course of a particular war, how much more difficult, how hopeless must it be to attempt to forecast all the issues of an unknown future. No man can tell to what dangers we may be exposed five years hence—ten years hence ; but it stands to reason, as Mr. Maxse has said, that, in the eternal struggle for existence between nations, the nation which is trained to the use of arms must in the long run prevail over the nation which is not ; the nation which refuses to be trained must in the long run lose ground in the midst of trained nations. It has been well compared to an egg in a basket of stones. Shake the basket, and the stones may roll this way or that way, but the egg is sure to be broken. The fundamental principle of the National Service League is independent of particular prophecies. It is independent of the international position at any given date. It is of universal validity in the present condition of mankind. All that it maintains is, that you must be far stronger and safer, less

likely, much less likely, to be attacked not only by weak peoples but by strong peoples, more certain if attacked to survive the crisis, if you know how to fight than if you do not. We are told that in preaching this doctrine we take no account of the sea or of the immense power of the British Navy. But it is a complete error to suppose that the advocates of universal military training either ignore the supreme importance of the Navy, or undervalue the greatness of that force, of which we are all proud. The Navy has something else to do besides watching the shores of these islands. The Navy, in case of war, has got to strike with all its powers at the decisive point, which may be distant. We want to be able to say to our sailors, 'Go, where you are wanted; go, all of you, destroy the enemy's fleet; we landsmen can take care that, while you are looking after your proper business, no invader shall set his foot on the shores of this country without having cause to regret it.' There is another point. Granted that invasion is altogether and for ever impossible—the fate of this Empire may be decided without invasion. It may be decided on the mainland of Europe, almost within sight of our shores. It may be decided on the frontier of India or in other distant lands. How should we men of England feel if our small Regular Army were being overwhelmed on some distant frontier by a force of immensely superior numbers, and if hundreds of thousands of able-bodied men in this country had to look on in impotence, in spite of the fact that we had more than enough transports to convey twenty divisions to their assistance. Would the men of England be willing to go? Yes, thousands of them. The national spirit is not dead. The Boer War proved that. But would they be of use when they arrived? For want of previous training and organisation many of them would not. The Boer War proved that also. You cannot improvise an army, and you must remember that the Boer War was small compared to the wars which we may have to wage. We are told that ours is a counsel of perfection, that we ask for something beyond the power

and endurance of this nation, and that we cannot expect to maintain both a navy as great as the British Navy, and an army as great as the German Army. But who proposes that we should maintain an army like the German Army—more than 400,000 perfectly trained soldiers always ready, and more than 1,000,000 mobilisable in a few weeks ? We should be content, and far more than content, if the military strength of this country stood in the same proportion to the military strength of Germany, as the German Navy stands to the British Navy. No one who knows the facts believes that this is at present the case. The naval needs of Germany are less than our naval needs. Our military needs are less than the military needs of Germany, though they are far greater, alas ! than our present military capacity. We should have every reason to be satisfied if, taking Army and Navy together, we compared favourably in defensive power with any of our rivals. Germany requires a great army always ready. What we require is a great, though not an equally great, reservoir of trained men upon which we could draw, though not so instantly or speedily. But we have got nothing of the kind, and that seems to be the view of the present War Minister. An excellent leaflet, indeed a whole series of pamphlets for the purpose of the National Service League, could be culled from the speeches of Mr. Haldane. He recognises the necessity of a reservoir of men. He believes in a second line of national defence. He believes that it is the duty of every man to prepare himself to defend his country in case of need, and certainly as far as his proposed organisation of the second line of defence goes, Mr. Haldane appears to be in the main on the right lines. I speak with some reserve on this point because, as I have already said, I am not a military expert, and I am in the presence of some eminent military experts, but it does appear to me that in two points at least Mr. Haldane has hit on the true principle—in attempting to give us one force behind the Regular Army, instead of a number of competing and overlapping forces, and in attempting to organise

that second line of defence on some rational principle, that of a proper proportion of the different arms with a proper equipment and with the several parts subordinated to the whole. The plan that he proposes seems to be the skeleton of a real body. What we want is to clothe it with flesh and blood. What is wanting in his proposed system is, in the first place, that we are not by any means sure of getting the men to fill the cadres, and in the next place it also suffers from this trifling defect, that we are not going to give these men, even if we get them, any serious training until war actually breaks out. The enemy, to be sure, would not be so inconsiderate or so unchivalrous as to hustle us unduly while we were busy drilling. Is not this playing with the whole thing? Is not this inconsistent with the root idea, that it is the duty of every man to serve if need be in defence of his country? But that duty implies a corresponding right, the claim that every man has on the State, that it should enable him by proper training and by proper equipment to discharge that duty with efficiency. Both these essentials are lacking here. There is no obligation to serve, and there is no provision for training which would be really adequate. I think that we should be grateful, and for my own part I am grateful, to Mr. Haldane for his ideas, but as a philosopher he cannot object if we press him to be logical and to carry them to their inevitable conclusion. If it is the duty, and he says it is the duty, of every able-bodied man, if need be, to defend his country, it cannot be a secondary or subordinate duty. If it is a duty at all, it is a very big duty. Why then object, and worse than object, why denounce and hold up your hands in horror at the idea of that duty being enforced by law, as every other civic duty, including many minor ones, is enforced? You do not leave it optional to a man to pay taxes. It is the duty of the citizen to contribute according to his means to the cost of the State, and the law compels him to do it. If it is also his duty to contribute in his person to the defence of the State, why should not the law compel him to do that also? Why in

the name of common sense is the one just and the other unjust? the one English and the other un-English? the one freedom and democratic government, and the other tyranny and oppression? It is simply absurd to talk of dragooning the people into general military service. Where is the power that can dragoon the people of this country? Unless a majority of the people are convinced of the necessity for it, the thing cannot be done. I know the argument 'What is the use of talking? The majority of the people never will approve of such a system.' Well, that remains to be seen. We stand here, at any rate, to declare our belief that you will never have real security, or, what is almost as important, the sense of security, unless you have behind your small Regular Army a national militia through which, with certain exceptions which every country recognises, your whole able-bodied youth are passed. We regard it as the completion of the education of the citizen. We hold that the State should have a claim on the service of the men so trained during the early years of their manhood in case of national emergency, as to the existence of which Parliament should decide. Finally, we believe that if all those men in authority, who realise our military weakness and the tremendous risks that it involves, had the courage to speak out as Lord Roberts does, the people of this country would shoulder the burden, if it be a burden, and make the sacrifice, if it be a sacrifice. Personally I go further, and believe, though I may be exceptional in believing it, that what appears to be a sacrifice would turn out to be a blessing, even if we never fought another war, as very likely we should never have to. The system we propose would be a blessing in peace as well as war. The last word I have to say to you is as to the question of cost. The cost in money would no doubt be considerable, but I do not think that it would be enormous. I do not think that it would be as great an annual charge as the interest on the money wasted during the Boer War in consequence of our unpreparedness. I am perfectly certain that it would not be equal to the interest on the money that would be

wasted in a really great war in consequence of the same unpreparedness. But no doubt what people are afraid of is not so much the cost in money as what may be called the cost in kind—the hardship that it might cause—a healthy hardship; the inconvenience that might be involved, the loss of time to the individual citizen, while he was taken away from productive labour. Yes, but there is something else. What if the sacrifice of time, which after all would be a very small percentage of a man's working life, is going to make him a better man during the rest of his working years, and very likely to prolong them? That is a point which you have to consider, and which especially the working men have to consider. Military training, in the vast majority of cases, tends to make a man physically better and morally tougher. It passes him through a school which, after all, has no equal for teaching discipline, endurance, manliness, order, comradeship, and patriotism. You talk of the loss of industrial efficiency. I believe that there would be a gain in industrial efficiency and a gain in other things too; a gain in the sense of common citizenship and the drawing together of classes by the performance of a common public duty; a gain in the increased feeling of dignity and responsibility which men would have, who had actually done something for their country. I believe that, if the nation had military training, it would not be necessary for us to blush, as we sometimes have to blush now, because reverence for the flag, the emblem of national unity, is made an object of derision by members of Parliament—even by Ministers of the State—or because one of the noblest and most inspiring of human sentiments is described by the opprobrious term of 'flag-wagging.' I trust that the day will come when reverence for the flag will be as great among us as it was among the ancestors who won for us the high place which we still hold among the nations of the world.

## GUILDHALL.—April 23, 1907

### *Empire Education*

[At a meeting in the City called by the Lord Mayor, who presided, and attended by many prominent people, irrespective of party, Lord Milner moved 'that a public subscription for the purpose of Empire education be inaugurated, and that the aid of the London and Provincial Press and of all societies and associations, without regard to party politics, be invoked to collect funds for the purpose; that copies of these resolutions be sent to the Government, all Lieutenants of Counties, Lord Mayors, and Mayors throughout the country, inviting them to call public meetings and submit thereto similar resolutions, and appeal for subscriptions to the fund.']

The field of knowledge in these days is so vast, the time available to gain even an elementary acquaintance with it is so limited, that there is no room for fads in education, there is no room for any work of supererogation. But surely it is not a fad, surely it is the very essence of a sound national education to make good citizens; and how can you expect to make them unless you familiarise the young with the nature of the State of which they are to become members, with the extent, if I may use that expression, of their heritage, with the opportunities it offers, and with the duties which it imposes on them. That, and nothing less than that, is the object which we set before ourselves. We want to make them realise the meaning of that flag which some of us desire to see floating over every school-house in every portion of the Empire. What does it mean? It means that every child of European race who is born a subject of the King is born a member of a certain State. What is the State of which he is born a member? It is not only the particular country of his birth; it is the whole dominions of the Crown. We want our youth to realise the greatness of this privilege—the fact that they are potential citizens of every community over which this flag flies, that in going from these islands to Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, they are not going to a strange land any more than the Canadian, the Australian, or the New Zealander is coming to a strange

land when he comes here; that their transference does not mean that they are going to be exiles or strangers, but that they are going from home to home, from one portion of their common country to another. Now, is that a difficult thing to teach, or is it a superfluous thing to bring home to them? I say it is as easy as it is vital. Give me a map of the British Empire—I do not think I should make a good schoolmaster, but I do think that with that map before me I could be interesting for half an hour, and that I could manage to make any class realise something of what it all meant to them individually. I believe that would not be beyond even my limited powers of explanation; but I hasten to add that I do not propose to deliver that half-hour's lecture on this occasion. Not that I think it is only British children who might be benefited by some instruction on the elementary facts of the British Empire. I think I know a good few adults who would be the better for it—not excluding some of our legislators.

Now I know that some people feel a kind of shudder when you talk to them about Imperial patriotism; they do not like the idea of looking on that map with such a lot of red upon it, because they think it leads to a spirit of boastfulness and aggression, and what they are pleased to call Jingoism. But is that really the spirit which the contemplation of that vast and complex structure which we call the British Empire is calculated to excite in any intelligent mind? A spirit of gratitude certainly—gratitude for the greatness of our birthright—a spirit of humble admiration for the efforts and the sacrifices of the past, for the enterprise, the courage, the heroic endurance, the patient labour of past generations of men and women of our race who have built it up and who are building it up to-day. This is something very different, the very antithesis of that spirit of boastfulness, of levity, of self-complacency which is attributed—how wrongly attributed—to those of us who are proud to call ourselves Imperialists. For my own part, the contemplation of that map inspires me not with feelings of boastfulness or over-confidence,

but with a sense of my own insignificance in the presence of anything so great, with a deep anxiety to preserve anything so precious, with a desire to be worthy of privileges so unique. That is the kind of spirit which we believe that Empire education is calculated to promote among the young. It is with something like a feeling of awe that I contemplate the British Empire of to-day, with something like a doubt whether any nation is capable of permanently sustaining so vast a burden and of rising to so great a responsibility. I should feel that more strongly if it were not for the faith which I have in the younger members of the great British family, in the future that is before them, in the growing desire, of which I feel we have lately had such striking testimony, to maintain and sustain and draw closer the bonds which unite us and them. With them I believe we can face the future with an equal mind. We cannot compel them to stay with us. We do not dream of doing so; but if they come forward and hold out the right hand of fellowship, if they claim to join with us in sustaining the great burden of our national destiny in an equal partnership, I cannot realise the depth of the blindness which would lead us to throw away so priceless an opportunity of unity. Only ignorance—ignorance the most crass and most unpardonable—could lead to such a catastrophe. It is against that ignorance that we are waging war.

BURLINGTON HOUSE, LONDON.—MAY 16, 1907

*Oxford University Endowment Fund.*

[From a speech at a meeting of Oxford men held to consider a scheme for raising a fund to meet the more urgent needs of the University.]

WHAT we have to understand is that the University is short of money to fulfil its duty, not only as the great home of classical learning, but as a University competent to keep up with all the new studies of the time. We realise the needs, and if it is said that we ought to wait before trying to supply those needs, till the University has reformed itself, and has applied all its endowments to the best possible

purposes, my reply is, that the University is constantly reforming itself, and that even if its endowments were perfectly applied, they still would not suffice for all the claims upon the Oxford of to-day.

## GROCERS' HALL, LONDON.—MAY 29, 1907

### *Freedom of City Companies.*

[From a speech in acknowledgment of the honorary freemanship of the Grocers' Company, conferred on Lord Milner in 1903.]

THERE is one feature which strikes me about the list of honorary freemen of the Grocers' Company, and that is that the Company seem to have had a special preference for those of their countrymen who have been called upon to serve outside this country, to maintain its honour and power, whether in war or peace, in distant lands. Men who are called upon so to serve their country never look forward to any higher reward in any time of stress or strain than that of being welcomed on their return home as men who have done, or tried to do, honest work. Recognition of that kind is what they look forward to above all, and I believe it is the healthy habit and practice of the British nation, irrespective of party, to extend such recognition to men who have tried to do their best in its service abroad. I am not particularly disturbed by the fact that from time to time party considerations do intrude, and that it is not always possible for a man who has been, or tried to be, the faithful agent of the Government of his day, to be regarded, at first at any rate, with equally favourable eyes by another Government and party; but I do not think you should make too much of that. As far as public praise or blame is concerned, if one is sometimes blamed when one does not deserve it, one is sometimes praised when one does not deserve it, and the best thing to do is to bank the praise when you get it, and live upon it when you do not get it, and not to make too much fuss either way. Let us take Montaigne's counsel not to make too much marvel of our own fortunes. Broadly speaking, and in the long run, I believe that when the temporary disturb-

ances caused by public controversy are over, public judgment settles down to a fair and reasonable appreciation of public servants, and I look forward to the time when the judgment of the Grocers' Company in enrolling me among its honorary freemen will be generally endorsed by the British public ; not indeed that they will place me on the same level as some of those for whom I have the honour to reply, but that they will hold me perhaps not altogether unworthy to be associated with them.

YORK.—May 30, 1907

*South Africa and the Consolidation of the Empire*

[At a meeting organised by the Yorkshire Liberal Unionist Association.]

It may seem an odd and even an insincere remark to make to a party meeting, but it gives me no pleasure to adopt a critical attitude to the Government of the country on Imperial questions, any more than it would on foreign questions. My instinct, as an old servant of the Crown, is to side with the Government of the day on these questions ; my earnest desire as a citizen is to see them removed from the arena of party troubles. It is with the greatest reluctance that I refer to South Africa at all. I don't like crying over spilt milk, but reticence has been rendered impossible, for me at any rate, by the self-laudation in which one Government speaker after another indulges, about what they are pleased to call the success of their South African policy. Not only are we to fall down and worship this grand achievement, but it is held up to us as a type and model for future guidance. Now, that being the case, I say it becomes a public duty to inquire what is the real character of this grand achievement, and what are the wonderful blessings which His Majesty's Government has bestowed upon South Africa, and especially upon the Transvaal, which has been the principal field of their beneficent activity. Well, evidently these blessings did not include the sordid item of material prosperity. In that respect the picture of the country, which has been blessed by their special attentions for eighteen months, is a picture

of unrelieved gloom. Don't take my words for this. I will cite the present Colonial Secretary of the Transvaal, a distinguished leader of the Dutch race.[1] Speaking the other day at Klerksdorp he said, 'our revenue has been falling off for months. The fall is progressive. There is no stop to it. I do not know how far it will go, but I must warn you not to expect too much from the Government, for the Government is face to face with a most serious financial condition.' Our newest colony has been brought to the verge of bankruptcy. I know the Government will try to make out that this is not all as I say; that the depression in that country has been continuous since the war; that there are other causes for it, besides the mischievous meddling from home. But no man who is familiar with the recent economic history of the Transvaal can maintain for one moment that this present depression is independent of the activity of the Government and of the Liberal party. So far from being no fault of theirs, it is entirely their creation. They are entitled to the sole and undivided credit of it. Indeed, very rarely in history has there been an economic effect so strikingly traceable to a single cause. When you talk of the economic condition of South Africa, you have to bear in mind three stages. There was great depression—nothing like what it is at present—but still very severe depression shortly after the war, due apparently to the after-effects of the war, but due even more, I believe, to the over-sanguine expectations which I shared with many other people as to a rapid expansion of industry—expectations which gradually died down as the labour difficulty became more and more oppressive.

But there was a distinct and unmistakable, though unfortunately a very short-lived recovery when, owing to the permission to supplement native labour by the introduction of labour from China, it appeared that the one great obstacle to the development of the country had been removed. I speak of what I know perfectly well from my own experience. I was living there at the time; I was in

[1] General Smuts.

command of all the means of information, and I remember that there was a most unmistakable improvement in every direction. So much so was that the case that, while, in the autumn of 1903, I remember that I regarded the financial prospects of South Africa with grave alarm, when I left the country in the spring of 1905 I did so, as far as its financial condition was concerned, with an absolutely easy mind. But then followed, in the second half of 1905, the revival of the anti-Chinese agitation in this country, culminating in the terminological, pictorial, and other inexactitudes which characterised the general election. From that day to this the policy of the party in power has been dominated by the necessity of justifying and living up to the excesses of that electoral campaign. And from that day to this, and as a consequence of that, and a consequence of that alone, the economic condition of the country has been one of steep, continuous, and most appalling decline. The apologists of the Government try to wriggle out of it by saying, 'Why, if the importation of labour was so necessary and expedient, has the depression continued and become worse since the Chinese came?' It did not become worse when the Chinese came; it became worse when their coming was interfered with. The Chinese experiment—I know it is unpopular in this country, but I shall not hesitate to defend it to the end—the Chinese experiment was never given the ghost of a chance. The last batch of the imported labourers had not landed, the first arrivals had not had time to acquaint themselves with the work or their surroundings, before we began to threaten to send the whole lot away again, and that before the expiry of their contracts. No industry in the world, no business, no enterprise, could possibly flourish if there were to be these sudden and arbitrary interferences with the very fundamental conditions on which it rests. Under these circumstances, all the poor Chinese could do was to increase the production of the mines by something like eight millions per annum. They could not prevent the effects of the threat to expel them, or of the overshadowing fear of

further ignorant Government interference with the conditions of industry. They could not prevent those things which have brought about the total destruction of confidence, the withdrawal of capital, the death of all new enterprise, the drying up of the springs of industry, and which have led to that appalling condition of affairs which you see in the Transvaal at present.

I will do the Government this justice. I believe they have not wished to do all the mischief that they have done. They have tried over and over again to get out of it by following what, on the principle of self-government, which they have themselves established, is now the only right course—letting the people of the colony settle this labour question for themselves. But the men behind them would not tolerate it; they will not tolerate it even now. Their respect for colonial independence, of which they are always boasting, does not go so far as that. It does not go the length of allowing the Transvaal to take a course which would prove them in the wrong, and show to all the world, if it needed showing, the magnitude of the deception which they practised upon the electorate here. They have handed over every British interest in the Transvaal, they boast of having handed them over, with one exception. That exception is the mining industry, upon which the whole prosperity of the country depends, and which the new Boer Government would be obliged, even for its own sake, to treat with a certain consideration. Therefore, it is not to be allowed to have a free hand to deal with it. It is to be coerced from here into inflicting injuries upon that industry, and in order to mitigate the effects of such injuries to the Boers themselves, the credit of this country is to be pledged to the extent of five millions —five millions to be given to the Boer farmers in order to induce them to continue the Radical policy of destroying the British industry of the Transvaal, and driving the British population out of the country. I know our sentimentalists will be very angry with me for having dwelt so much on these base material considerations. What matters a

hundred millions knocked off the value of British property and British investments in South Africa, compared with the impressive but elevating spectacle which their policy has produced—Briton and Boer locked in a fraternal embrace, and General Botha, who lately commanded armies in the field against us, asseverating his devotion to King and Empire. Well then, I am prepared to put aside this paltry economic aspect of things. I will look at the grand achievement entirely from its political and moral side. It is just from that side that it seems to me most deplorable. The injury inflicted on the South African British, great as it is, wanton as it is, is nothing in the history of the Empire as compared with the political folly of hurrying on self-government at a time and under conditions which are bound to give you a Dutch instead of a British Transvaal. Now you will say to me : What is the importance of that ? It is the decisive factor in the future complexion of all South Africa—political, social, racial. We are constantly being confronted with the Canadian precedent. The very essence of the Canadian precedent was the fact that we had a British Ontario to balance a non-British Quebec. Precisely in the same way we had it in our power, we held it in our hands, if we had only had a little patience, and a rational economic policy, to create a mainly British Transvaal, which would have been a fair and sufficient balance and counterpoise to the Dutch predominance in the Orange River Colony and the Cape. So that you would have had a fusion and growth of a new composite nation, not, indeed, British, but with a sufficiently strong British element to become, as Canada has become, a willing and helpful member of a great Imperial family. I put that forward as being, for ever and ever, the only one true, wise, rational, and patriotic policy.

What is the position to-day ? To-day the Transvaal is, politically, entirely in the hands of Het Volk—a body which has not even got an English name. It is a Dutch racial organisation of the purest type, and the British elements which it has absorbed, or may absorb, will produce

just as much effect upon its character, as the National Scouts who joined us towards the end of the war produced upon the character of Lord Kitchener's army. The Orange River Colony within a few months will find itself still more completely under Dutch domination. At the next election in the Cape Colony, when the disfranchised rebels will be restored to the register, Het Volk will be once more in office, and then you will see the whole of South Africa, from Cape Town to the Limpopo, under the dominance of the militant Dutch party, and the British population will be once more—I hope not for ever, but Heaven alone knows for how long—the under-dog. That is the grand achievement—very grand from the antinational point of view. No doubt the significance of it is obscured by the exchange of courtesies that has marked, and very properly marked, the visit of the Prime Minister of the Transvaal to this country. General Botha himself is a man for whom it is easy even for his opponents to feel respect, both as a soldier and as a statesman. I yield to no one in my admiration for his manly, his sensible, and his conciliatory speeches. More than that, I believe those speeches express (subject to that amount of over-statement which is inevitable in the circumstances) his real mind, that he is desirous of pursuing a moderate course and mitigating the violence of the transition which has placed him and his party in absolute power in the Transvaal. But neither General Botha nor any man can work miracles. He cannot prevent, though he may soften, the inevitable injustices which are involved in this, as in any other revolution, to the adherents and allies of the system which has been swept away. Only continuity of policy, only a process of gradual change—evolution in fact, not revolution—could have prevented these, and General Botha is not to blame because we have chosen to pursue a headlong policy. And then, again, he, like other leaders, has to take account of the men behind him. I know many people in this country, not only the supporters of the present Government, but many belonging to the Opposition, are hugging themselves with

the idea, that our generosity has made a deep impression upon the Boer people, and that we can count upon their eternal gratitude and affection. Well, that is not the interpretation which the Boers generally have put upon our action. In some parts of the back veld the impression prevails, as I am told by friends of mine who live there, that England has been conquered by some foreign country. They are rather vague in the back veld about our geography and politics, but they are very shrewd people nevertheless. But among the more educated and influential Boers a different impression prevails. The impression is less crude, perhaps, but not, as it seems to me, less insidious or dishonouring to this country. I want to read you a passage from the *Volkstem*, a very able paper, the principal organ of the party now in power in the Transvaal.

'Much in the attitude of the British public towards General Botha, that would otherwise appear difficult of explanation, becomes intelligible only when we bear in mind Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman's openly expressed conviction that the late war has been useless, frivolous, and criminal. Though late in the day, John Bull has had his qualm of conscience, and is beginning to realise that the late Boer states have been treated in a manner which could only conduce to the permanent disadvantage of Empire, unless an honest attempt were made to mitigate as much as possible the consequences of an iniquitous act.'

So much for our delusion about the grand impression made by our generosity and confidence! Not generosity but a tardy repentance and confession of guilt, entitling us not to gratitude but at best to a mitigation of punishment. Well, to you and me it may be a matter of comparative indifference that our actions should be thus misinterpreted, but how about our fellow criminals in South Africa? How about the men and women, and especially the scattered and the isolated ones living on lonely farms among none too sympathetic neighbours, who, seven and a half years ago, when forty-eight hours' notice was given to us to clear out of South Africa, took their fortunes and some-

times their lives in their hands, in order to support the Mother Country in what they believed to be a just and inevitable struggle. Pleasant reading for them, this sort of thing! An alluring prospect! Surely, if we can do nothing more for them, we might at least refrain from impairing that which is alone left to them, their moral position, and be careful not to take any course which could make it appear that the Mother Country, for whose cause they made such sacrifices, is now ashamed of the cause which she called upon them to support. My point is that General Botha has by no means an easy task before him in carrying out that policy of appeasement which I believe he desires to carry out. And that task will not be rendered any the easier by premature jubilations, which treat his no doubt honest declarations as if they were already accomplished deeds. Let us honour him for his admirable bearing in the trying ordeal of his recent visit to this country. Let us show our cordial appreciation of his good intentions. But good sense and good feeling alike, consideration for him and consideration for those who have been his opponents, should bid us reserve our pæans and our profusest gratitude, until he has had at least a little time to convert his intentions into acts.

After what has happened, the hope of binding South Africa to us in bonds of sympathy and affection must necessarily be greatly diminished. But we may still retain her allegiance, if the position of the Empire as a whole remains one which will give South Africans of whatever race an interest and a pride in belonging to it. Therefore, the future of South Africa, and much else, depends upon the consolidation of the British Empire, upon the great movement, yet in its infancy, which seeks to draw together in more effective political bonds the scattered self-governing communities which all own allegiance to our sovereign. The scope and the importance of that great movement, and also its difficulties, have recently been brought vividly before us at the Imperial Conference. I think it is better to wait for a full report of the proceedings

of that Conference, before entering into discussions of it in detail. But even in the meagre *précis*, which is all that has been hitherto vouchsafed to us, there are some points which stand out with startling clearness. It is from the Colonies that all the proposals for closer union come. All the keenness, all the initiative, all the enthusiasm is on their side. The attitude of the representatives of this country was an attitude of sometimes polite and sometimes defiant negation. Prince Bismarck once said of another foreign statesman, who shall be nameless, that he was so much afraid of committing himself, that, the first thing he did when he woke in the morning, was to say 'No' three times, for fear of agreeing to anything in the course of the day. I am confident that the representatives of His Majesty's Government at the recent Conference must have gone through the same vocal exercise over their early morning cup of tea. The President of the Board of Trade no doubt said—and it was the most sympathetic remark which fell from any representative of Great Britain during the whole proceedings—that this federation of free communities was worth some sacrifice. It was a welcome and a memorable admission. But the course of the proceedings did not disclose any sacrifice which Mr. Lloyd George was prepared or was allowed to make. What it did disclose was an obstinate determination on the part of the representatives of this country, not even to discuss the one proposal upon which all the Colonies were agreed, not even in the attenuated, final form of a reduction in favour of the Colonies of existing duties which nobody could say involved any sacrifice, but the reverse, on the part of the consumers in this country. But perhaps, after all, it is better, though it was a bitter disappointment at the time, that the representatives of this country would not make even the vestige of a concession to the policy, which all the colonial representatives were agreed in advocating. It is better, because some small concession to preferential trade might have disarmed a few of its advocates, without giving that system a really fair trial. As things stand,

there is clearly nothing for it, but for all those, who feel any sympathy for the policy which the Colonies are pressing upon us, to fight for all they are worth. For my own part, I am glad that the fight is to be on a broad issue and all along the line. His Majesty's Government say that they are reluctantly compelled to adopt their attitude of pure negation on principle. Well, but we are also fighting for a principle. Our principle is that blood is thicker than water. There is a great deal more in this question than a mere redistribution of the incidents of taxation—so much off this article and so much on another. Neither does it begin or end with tariff alone. Preferential trade, and a great deal else, will follow as a matter of course, if British citizens, in every part of the Empire, can only learn to take the right attitude towards one another. I greatly sympathise with Sir William Lyne, when he says that the Colonists resent the idea that they should be treated on the same footing as foreigners. We know they have had their dinners paid for. We have delicately reminded them of it. But there is something more than that which they desire. I believe that the offer of preference, which some of our colonies have already given us, and which some are still anxious to give to us, is due quite as much to the influence of kinship and affection as it is to any material consideration. I think that the sting of our refusal to reciprocate lies chiefly in the impression it gives of a want of sympathy on our part. But is it wise to try to wean them from a sense of our common relationship, and of the consequences it involves ? Wise or otherwise, I do not think it is in accordance with the instinctive desire or wishes of the majority of the British people. I do not believe the Government will ever go to the country to ask it to support them in their attitude of blank negation to preferential trade as a whole. I am confident that their object will be to look for other issues, and pick a quarrel with the House of Lords, in order to obscure that great issue, when the next appeal is made. They must be aware of the deep uneasiness which exists among many of their supporters about the attitude which

has been taken to the colonial offer. It has been said that the colonial offer was an hallucination of Mr. Chamberlain. The proceedings of the Conference have knocked that contention stone dead. Neither is it possible to say that preference is not a substantial advantage to us. It was admitted by Ministers during the discussion—grudgingly by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, generously by the President of the Board of Trade—that the preference already granted by Canada had been of the greatest advantage to us, and the preference granted by Australia and New Zealand will be of similar advantage, as soon as it has had time to be tested. One by one the arguments against preferential trade are going. Its opponents will soon be left with nothing but the 'big loaf and little loaf' cry, and tremendously effective as that cry has doubtless been in the past, I believe that, like its brother cry of Chinese slavery, its days are numbered. We all know now that the 'slaves' are so enamoured of their fetters that no inducement offered to them at your and my expense can induce them to put their fetters off or quit the scene of their oppression and their torments. But the derision, which has overtaken the cry of Chinese slavery, will presently overtake its brother cry. We were told, when Mr. Chamberlain made the monstrous proposal to impose a duty of two shillings a quarter upon foreign wheat, that thirteen millions of the poorest people in this country, living on the verge of starvation, would be plunged into the abyss. But what has happened during the last few months? Wheat has risen by six shillings a quarter. Where are all those starving millions, who must be three times as much starved as they would have been under the two shillings duty? Every Radical platform is ringing with congratulations as to the abounding prosperity of the country. I do not say that six shillings a quarter is not a serious thing. It is. But I do say that, if we can carry without wincing six shillings a quarter imposed upon us involuntarily by the accident of the season or the rigging of the market, we certainly shall not collapse under two shillings volun-

tarily accepted in order to obtain a prerogative position in the greatest and most growing markets of the world. When I say that, I may seem to admit that a light duty upon corn would increase the price to the consumer. But I admit nothing of the kind. I believe it to be a most arguable proposition, and particularly in the case of corn, I believe that in probability there would be no rise at all. I go further than that, and I say that, if Mr. Chamberlain's proposal had been accepted three years ago instead of being laughed out of court by this big and little loaf phantasy, it is perfectly possible that the present rise would not have occurred, and, in any case, it would not have been as great as it is. For what has always been the strongest argument for preference to Canada in the matter of wheat importation? It is the enormous extent of her yet undeveloped agricultural land, which it only needs slight encouragement to bring under cultivation. If we had given that encouragement, the scarcity with which we are now threatened would never have occurred. But my argument does not rest on the contention that a light duty on any article of general consumption does not raise the price of that article. Assuming that it does—if for some great object we were to impose that duty and it were to fall on the consumer—what I say is that we have ample opportunities for compensating the consumer by the reduction of taxes in other directions. It is undoubtedly a fundamental part of the doctrine of Tariff Reform, as I understand it, that, taking articles of universal consumption as a whole, our policy will not lead to any increase in their cost. And then there is such a thing as throwing a sprat to catch a herring. The object, the great object, of the whole policy of preferential trade, is to encourage the interchange of goods between this country and its great possessions over the seas, which are already enormously our best customers. A vast amount of wholly idle argument is constantly going on with regard to the question whether our colonial trade or our foreign trade is of most value to us—idle because the adoption of the principle of

preference is not going to injure our foreign in the very smallest degree. Why on earth should it? Nobody can tell you that. What it is going to do, is to develop to a very great extent our exports to our own Colonies—who are already our best customers. That is the great point, the fact that, man for man, the Colonies already take from us goods ranging from £2 a head at the lowest point, to something like £7, 10s. a head at the highest point, whereas even our best customers in other countries do not take more than 2s. to 12s. a head. And not only that, but by developing our trade with our best customers we are actually going to multiply those customers. Here is perhaps the most important consideration of all, yet that which we hear of least in this country in connection with preferential trading. I mean the effect which it will have in developing the resources and increasing the population of the British dominions over-sea. And that, my lords and gentlemen, is the last argument which I am going to address to you, but it has a vital bearing upon the second point in the resolution before the meeting to-night, namely, the defence of the Empire. The first condition of defence is man-power—the number, the health, the strength of your citizens. Now, the habitable but still uninhabited portions of the British Empire will take millions upon millions of healthy, well-developed human beings. Our object is to fill those empty spaces, to use our trade policy so as to direct emigration into distant parts of our own dominions, instead of allowing it to go to waste all over the world. We do not at present use the enormous advantages which our power as a great consuming country gives us. We should be able, by granting a very slight preference, to give an enormous advantage to the people who enjoy that preference. I say, then, bearing all these points in mind—the commercial importance of the matter, but still more its importance for the purpose of defence, its importance for the purpose of unity—let us grasp the hand which our fellow-countrymen from over the seas have stretched out towards us. Let

us accept and establish for ever the principle that, not only in the struggles of war, but in the competitions of peace, we shall stand together as one nation; that we shall, by reciprocal concessions, develop our respective industries and encourage intercourse with one another; that we shall use our vast consuming power in this country with its teeming population, to build up new homes for our children in British dominions beyond the seas, and thus, at one and the same time, increase the prosperity, the strength, and the unity of the Empire.

## HOUSE OF LORDS.—JUNE 25, 1907

### *Territorial and Reserve Forces Bill*

[The Under-Secretary of State for War—Lord Portsmouth—in moving the second reading of this Bill, ruled out compulsory service on the grounds of its expensiveness, its superfluousness—since 'in no circumstances would we require the services of the total number, amounting to about 400,000, reaching the age of military service in each year'—its unpopularity, and because 'the chief military problem in our case is not defence of the United Kingdom so much as defence of the Empire, and a compulsory system will not help us much in this.' Another difficulty, on which the speaker said that he need not dwell, was that 'of harmonising such a system with the upkeep of an army for service abroad which Imperial necessities demand.']

MY LORDS, like the noble Lord who has just addressed you, I approach this question purely as a civilian. I approach it with reluctance in an assembly containing so many men distinguished both by their achievements and by their knowledge of matters military, but perhaps I have had rather closer touch with the realities of war than many civilians. I have stood on the brink of and looked into the black abyss of national disaster, and the lessons which that experience taught me I shall carry with me to the grave. I have seen this country with its 40,000,000 of people, and the Empire behind it with some 12,000,000 or 15,000,000 more of the same race, engaged in a struggle with a small people about one-hundredth of

their number, and on the brink of defeat. And what made that experience bitterest of all was the thought that it was wholly unnecessary; that this country had immense resources in men, brave, patriotic, and willing, and yet at the critical moment it could only just muster a sufficient number to pull through. That experience impressed upon me for my lifetime the fact that you cannot improvise soldiers, and that no amount of patriotism, willingness, or devotion will save a militarily untrained nation from disaster in any great struggle.

I should have hesitated to have addressed your Lordships to-night, but for two reasons. One is that those who agree with me on the question of compulsory service —I fear we are but a small number in this House, but we are a growing body in the nation—have been directly challenged by the noble Earl, the Under-Secretary of State for War. I do not know why he directed so much attention to this puny body of adversaries, unless it was that he felt a little happier in dealing with those generalities with which it is possible to attack the position of the advocates of compulsory service than in dealing with some of the details of the complicated scheme which he was expounding. Be that as it may, I feel bound to say a few words in reply to some of the points which he raised against us. But there is another reason, and that is that I have been asked and pressed to speak by the noble and gallant Earl Lord Roberts, who is my leader on this question. I recognise him as my captain and obey his orders, though I sincerely wish he had a more able lieutenant. I will do this at the bidding of the noble Earl, not only because I recollect the day when he came out to South Africa and turned disaster into victory, which alone would have entitled him to my willing obedience in all questions of this kind, but because, if I may say so without disrespect, I feel when listening to the noble and gallant Earl on this subject, that I am breathing a different atmosphere from that which prevails when even the ablest and most experienced of those distinguished statesmen who have to deal with military questions in the

country are addressing us. It seems to me that the noble Earl keeps continually before him and is always pressing towards two vital points: our requirements and our capacities, which are the only two points which in my opinion profoundly matter; whereas all others who deal with this question, however great the ability and experience which they bring to bear upon it, never get beyond certain given conditions which have no foundations in the nature and essence of things, and are more or less accidental —I mean the existing objection on the part of perhaps the majority, at any rate of large classes, of the people to citizen service, and the idea of a given number of millions which we have drifted into regarding as a sort of generally admitted figure round which our military expenditure is bound to revolve.

When I consider how different has been the experience of many of our most distinguished statesmen at the War Office from their experience anywhere else, when I see one man after another, who in every other public office or public duty which he has filled or discharged has achieved great distinction, attempting in succession the task of reforming our military system, and not one emerging from the ordeal with increased credit, I do not believe for a moment that it can be the fault of those distinguished men. Why should they always be less successful as Secretaries of State for War than in any other capacity? The fault lies in the fact that we are trying to deal with this question on an impossible basis, and we shall continue to fail as long as we try to deal with it on that basis. Given the necessities of the British Empire, given the vast responsibility for defence which it imposes upon us, I am firmly convinced that you cannot produce any satisfactory military scheme, if you are going to be bound by the two rigid limits of volunteer service and an expenditure of something like £28,000,000 of money. We shall go on from failure to failure unless we recognise that fundamental condition of things.

Do we approach the question of our naval defence in this spirit? Attention has been called to-night to the

fact that the Naval Estimates at one time circled round ten or eleven millions, and they have become £36,000,000 —reduced now, I believe, to £30,000,000. Why was it that the nation, which at one time would not agree to spend more than £11,000,000 on the Navy, accepted and accepts with readiness this much larger sum? Because the question of naval defence has once for all been put upon an intelligible basis, because it has been approached from the point of view of a reasoned and thought-out consideration of our requirements. Nothing of the kind is ever attempted—at any rate officially—in connection with the requirements for the defence of the Empire on land. If we were to approach the matter from the point of view of our requirements, I do not believe that it would involve so enormous an increase of expenditure, though I have always admitted that some increase would be necessary. We should, however, find that it demanded a number of men which we can never hope to get on the present basis. Only numbers far larger than are contemplated by Mr. Haldane's expeditionary force, and far larger than any British statesman has ever dared face, would really suffice to defend this State and Empire in contingencies which are far from improbable. It is because the noble and gallant Field-Marshal continually and courageously strives to make his countrymen realise these facts, and deals with the subject on the fundamental ground of what is really necessary for the defence of the Empire, instead of for ever arguing upon certain given, more or less accidental, data, which have been conventionally accepted by both parties in politics—it is for this reason that he appeals on this question to his countrymen as I believe no other statesman of to-day appeals, and is producing an effect upon public opinion, of the extent of which political leaders are at present very little aware.

I wish to be as brief as possible, but I should like to reply shortly to some of the arguments addressed to us by the noble Earl who moved the Second Reading of the Bill. I am not sure that I shall cover the ground of all his objec-

tions, but I will deal with the most important. One objection which he took, and it is a common one, was that any system of universal military training and service, such as is advocated by the National Service League, would provide us with a much larger army than we need for home defence, and would not provide what after all we most need, namely, the power of expansion for our Expeditionary Army in case of a serious war abroad. I think that is a fair statement of one of the noble Earl's arguments. But that is an argument which comes strangely from the noble Earl, representing as he does in this House a Secretary of State who has dwelt with emphasis over and over again, and has defended his whole plan principally on the ground of the importance of having such a force in this country as would enable us greatly to expand our Army abroad in the event of any really serious danger to the Empire. That is the whole justification of the 'Nation in Arms,' for which the Secretary of State has made such eloquent appeals.

Let me say how this question strikes me. I consider that we are killing two birds with one stone. I do not believe that we are so safe in this country either from raids or from serious invasion as some noble Lords assume. I believe there is a great deal of the best military opinion on my side, and as long as there is any serious military opinion in favour of the possibility not only of a raid but of a really dangerous invasion, I for my part decline to have anything to do with running the fearful risk of being as unprepared to meet it as we are to-day. Against any serious invasion we require numbers such as the system we advocate alone would give. But there is a great deal more in it than that. The existence of a large body of really trained men in this country would give a freedom to our Regular Army which it does not at present possess, because a certain number under present circumstances will always be retained here. Most important of all, it would give to our Fleet a freedom of action which would at least double its effective usefulness in time of war. There is nothing more serious in our present state of military

unpreparedness at home than the cramping effect which it would have on the action of our Fleet. The first principle of naval strategy, whether we belong to the Blue Water School or not, is that the Fleet should be free to go and seek out the enemy's fleet and destroy it. Can any one who knows the state of public opinion in this country realise what the effect of the absence of the Fleet from these shores with an enemy possibly threatening them would be? Can anybody believe that the boldest Secretary of State would venture to send the Fleet where he ought to send it in case of war with any great Power, as long as we had not such an army or at any rate such an armed force in this country as would put any danger of invasion out of the question? The existence of a trained nation here would in the first place give far greater effectiveness to our Regular Army, but it would also give far greater effectiveness to our Fleet.

But no doubt the greatest point of all is that, if we had here a trained nation, if we had what the Secretary of State has asked for, namely, a large reserve of men trained to arms, we should be able to send out in case of a great emergency a large number of volunteers, who would be effective soldiers from the first moment they took part in the campaign. The risk which we run to-day, the weakness which afflicted us so greatly in the South African War, and the weakness which may destroy us in the case of a great war, is that there is no amount of military training and knowledge on the part of the nation at all proportionate to the amount of bravery and patriotism which its citizens undoubtedly possess. Undoubtedly the strongest of all arguments for the general military training of the people is the fact, that it would put this nation into a position effectively to defend any portion of the Empire, if it was convinced of the rightness of the war in which it was engaged. To-morrow you might be engaged in a struggle in which there were not, as there unfortunately were in the case of the South African War, differences of opinion among us—a struggle in which we were all con-

vinced of the righteousness of our cause—a struggle upon which the very life of our Empire depended, and in which we might require 500,000 men. We have got the 500,000 men, but how many of them would be of any use in the field if they were to volunteer and go out? The two vital points of the whole discussion are our possible requirements and our actual capacities. The contention of those who are led by the noble and gallant Field-Marshal is that it is the business of our statesmen to see that every potential military capacity of the country is developed to such an extent as will enable us to provide for our possible requirements.

Then one word in conclusion as to the alleged moral superiority of the voluntary principle. We are told that a smaller number of men giving their services freely are better worth having than a larger number acting under compulsion. What I object to in the present system is the premium which it sets upon a man not doing his duty in the matter of personal service for the defence of his country. If we even held the balance fairly between those who undertake this duty and those who do not, there would be something to be said for it. But our present system inevitably throws the whole weight of our habits and social arrangements into the scale against the men who undertake this duty and favours the men who shirk it, so that the whole weight of the system leans against the volunteer. But I for my part am totally unable to understand how it can be contended, on the one hand, that the training of a man to fit himself to take part in the defence of the country and Empire is a duty, and, on the other hand, that it is an injury to the man to insist on his performing that duty. I cannot see the difference between this principle and the principle of taxation. You might just as well contend that, though it was the duty of a man to contribute with his purse to the defence of the country, yet it was unjustifiable to make that contribution a legal obligation upon him. The two things seem to me to rest upon absolutely the same basis of principle, and I am

thoroughly convinced that, if you are really going to attempt what I believe this Bill honestly desires to do, namely, to obtain a citizen army of adequate dimensions, you will never be successful so long as you are not in a position to lay down some general rule with regard to it to which all citizens have to conform. On the very threshold of your efforts, you are met by the objection of the employers. We are told that no doubt it would be better if these people trained for a fortnight or three weeks, but that it cannot be done, because employers are willing to let them go for a week, but not for a fortnight. The whole national attitude of mind which makes such an argument possible is wrong. If this is a thing which is for the good of the nation as a whole, the question of the convenience of employers cannot be allowed to stand in the way. Yet it will stand in the way, and difficulties of this character will for ever defeat you, until you have laid down one general simple rule for every able-bodied man with regard to service in the Army, and then, in this country as in other more logical countries, such difficulties will be swept away.

## TUNBRIDGE WELLS.—October 24, 1907

### *Tariff Reform*

[At a meeting organised by the Tariff Reform League.]

As this is a Tariff Reform meeting pure and simple, I am anxious not to approach the subject in any party spirit or in any spirit of acrimonious controversy. The question is a difficult and complicated one, and though I am a strong Tariff Reformer myself, I hope I am not incapable of seeing both sides of the case. I certainly should have reason to be ashamed if I could not be fair to those whom, for the sake of brevity and convenience, I will call Free Traders, though I do not altogether admit the correctness of that designation. My views were once the same as theirs, and though I long ago felt constrained to modify them, and had become a Tariff Reformer some years before the subject

attained its present prominence in public discussion, it would ill become me to treat as foolish arguments which I once found so convincing, or to vilify opinions which I once honestly shared.

What has happened to me is what I expect has happened to a good many people. I still admire the great Free Trade writers, the force of their intellect, the lucidity of their arguments. There can be no clearer proof of the spell which they exercised over the minds of their countrymen, than the fact that so many leading public men on both sides of politics remain their disciples to this very day. But for my own part, I have been unable to resist the evidence of facts, which shows me clearly that in the actual world of trade and industry things do not work out even approximately as they ought to work out, if the Free Trade theory were the counsel of perfection which I once thought it. And that has led me to question the theory itself; and so questioned, it now seems to me far from a correct statement of the truth, even from the point of view of abstract inquiry. But I am not here to engage in abstract arguments. What I want to do is to look at the question from a strictly practical point of view, but at the same time a very broad one. I am anxious to bring home to you the place of Tariff Reform in a sound national policy, for, indeed, it seems to me very difficult to construct such a policy without a complete revision of our fiscal arrangements. Now a sound national policy has two aspects. There are two great objects of practical patriotism, two heads under which you may sum it up, much as the Church Catechism sums up practical religion, under the heads of 'duty to God' and 'duty to your neighbour.' These objects are the strength of the Empire, and the health, the well-being, the contentedness of the mass of the people, resting as they always must on steady, properly organised, and fairly remunerated labour. Remember always, these two things are one; they are inseparable. There can be no adequate prosperity for the forty or fifty million people in these islands without the Empire

and all that it provides ; there can be no enduring Empire without a healthy, thriving, manly people at the centre. Stunted, overcrowded town populations, irregular employment, sweated industries, these things are as detestable to true Imperialism as they are to philanthropy. And they are detestable to the Tariff Reformer. His aim is to improve the condition of the people at home, and to improve it concurrently with strengthening the foundations of the Empire. Mind you, I do not say that Tariff Reform alone is going to do all this. I make no such preposterous claim for it. What I do say is that it fits in better, alike with a policy of social reform at home and with a policy directed to the consolidation of the Empire, than our existing fiscal system does.

Now, what is the essential difference between Tariff Reformers and the advocates of the present system ? I must dwell on this even at the risk of appearing tiresome, because there is so much misunderstanding on the subject. In the eyes of the advocates of the present system, the statesman, or at any rate the British statesman, when he approaches fiscal policy, is confronted with the choice of Hercules. He is placed, like the rider in the old legend, between the black and the white horseman. On the one hand is an angel of light called Free Trade ; on the other a limb of Satan called Protection. The one is entirely and always right ; the other is entirely and always wrong. All fiscal wisdom is summed up in clinging desperately to the one and eschewing like sin anything that has the slightest flavour of the other. Now, that view has certainly the merit of simplicity, and simplicity is a very great thing ; but, if we look at history, it does not seem quite to bear out this simple view. This country became one of the greatest and wealthiest in the world, under a system of rigid Protection. It has enjoyed great, though by no means unbroken, prosperity under Free Trade. Side by side with that system of ours, other countries have prospered even more under quite different systems. These facts alone are sufficient to justify the critical spirit, which

is the spirit of the Tariff Reformer. He does not believe in any absolute right or wrong in such a matter as the imposition of duties upon imports. Such duties cannot, he thinks, be judged by one single test, namely, whether they do or do not favour the home producer, and be condemned out of hand if they do favour him.

The Tariff Reformer rejects this single cast-iron principle. He refuses to bow down before it, regardless of changing circumstances, regardless of the policy of other countries and of that of the other Dominions of the Crown. He wants a free hand in dealing with imports, the power to adapt the fiscal policy of this country to the varying conditions of trade, and to the situation created at any given time by the fiscal action of others. He has no superstitious objection to using duties either to increase employment at home or to secure markets abroad. But, on the other hand, he does not go blindly for duties upon foreign imports as so-called Free Traders go blindly against them, except in the case of articles not produced in this country, some of which the Free Traders are obliged to tax preposterously. Tariff Reform is not one-ideaed, rigid, inelastic, as our existing system is. Many people are afraid of it, because they think Tariff Reformers want to put duties on foreign goods for the fun of the thing, merely for the sake of making them dearer. Certainly Tariff Reformers do not think that cheapness is everything. Certainly they hold that the blind worship of immediate cheapness may cost the nation dear in the long run. But, unless cheapness is due to some mischievous cause, they are just as anxious that we should buy cheaply as the most ardent Cobdenite, and especially that we should buy cheaply what we cannot produce ourselves. Talking of cheapness, however, I must make a confession which I hope will not be misunderstood by ladies present who are fond of shopping—I wish we could get out of the way of discussing national economics so much from the shopping point of view. Surely what matters, from the point of view of the general well-being, is the productive capacity of the people, and the

actual amount of their production of articles of necessity, use, or beauty. Everything we consume might be cheaper, and yet if the total amount of things which were ours to consume was less, we should be not richer but poorer. It is, I think, one of the first duties of Tariff Reformers to keep people's eyes fixed upon this vital point—the amount of our national production. It is that which constitutes the real income of the nation, on which wages and profits alike depend.

And that brings me to another point. Production in this country is dependent on importation, more dependent than in most countries. We are not self-supplying. We must import from outside these islands vast quantities of raw materials and of the necessaries of life. That, at least, is common ground between the Free Trader and the Tariff Reformer. But the lessons they draw from the fact are somewhat different. The Free Trader is only anxious that we should buy all these necessary imports as cheaply as possible. The Tariff Reformer is also anxious that we should buy them cheaply, but he is even more anxious to know how we are going to pay for all this vast quantity of things which we are bound to import. And that leads him to two conclusions. The first is that, seeing how much we are obliged to buy from abroad in any case, he looks rather askance at our increasing our indebtedness by buying things which we could quite easily produce at home, especially with so many unemployed and half-employed people. The other, and this is even a more pressing solicitude to him, is that it is of vital importance to us to look after our external markets, to make sure that we shall always have customers, and good customers, to buy our goods, and so to enable us to pay for our indispensable imports. The Free Trader does not share this solicitude. He has got a comfortable theory, that if you only look after your imports your exports will look after themselves. Will they? The Tariff Reformer does not agree with that at all. Imports no doubt are paid for by exports, but it does not in the least follow that, by increasing your dependence on others,

you will necessarily increase their dependence on you. It would be much truer to say: 'Look after the exports and the imports will look after themselves.' The more you sell the more you will be able to buy, but it does not in the least follow that the more you buy the more you will be able to sell. What business man would go on the principle of buying as much as possible and say: 'Oh, that is all right. I am sure to be able to sell enough to pay for it.' The first thought of a wise business man is for his markets, and you as a great trading nation are bound to think of your markets, not only your markets of to-day but of to-morrow and the day after to-morrow.

The Free Trade theory was the birth of a time when our imports were practically all supplemental to our exports, all indispensable to us, and when, on the other hand, the whole of the world was in need of our goods, far beyond our power of supplying it. Since then, the situation has wholly altered. At this actual moment, it is true, there is temporarily a state of things which in one respect reproduces the situation of fifty years ago. There is for the moment an almost unlimited demand for some of our goods abroad. But that is not the normal situation. The normal situation is that there is an increasing invasion of our markets by goods from abroad, which we used to produce ourselves, and an increasing tendency to exclude our goods from foreign markets. The Tariff Reform movement is the inevitable result of these altered circumstances. There is nothing artificial about it. It is not, as some people think, the work of a single man, however much it may owe to his genius and his courage, however much it may suffer, with other good causes, through his enforced retirement from the field. It is not an eccentric idea of Mr. Chamberlain's. Sooner or later it was bound to come in any case. It is the common sense and experience of the people waking up to the altered state of affairs, beginning to shake itself free from a theory which no longer fits the facts. It is a movement of emancipation, a twofold struggle for freedom—in the sphere of economic

theory, for freedom of thought, in the sphere of fiscal policy, for freedom of action.

And that freedom of action is needed quickly. It is needed now. I am not doubtful of the ultimate triumph of Tariff Reform. Sooner or later, I believe, it is sure to achieve general recognition. What does distress me is the thought of the opportunities we are losing in the meantime. This year has been marked, disastrously marked, in our annals by the emphatic and deliberate rejection on the part of our Government of the great principle of preferential trade within the Empire. All the other self-governing states are in favour of it. The United Kingdom alone blocks the way. What does that mean? What is it that we risk losing as long as we refuse to accept the principle of preferential trade, and will certainly lose in the long run, if we persist in that refusal? It is a position of permanent and assured advantage in some of the greatest and most growing markets in the world. Preference to British goods in the British dominions beyond the sea would be a constant and potent influence tending to induce the people of those countries to buy what they require to buy outside their own borders from us, rather than from our rivals. It means beyond all doubt and question so much more work for British hands. And the people of those countries are anxious that British hands should get it. They have, if I may so express myself, a family feeling, which makes them wish to keep the business within the family. But business is business. They are willing to give us the first chance. But if we will give nothing in return, if we tell them to mind their own business and not to bother us with offers of mutual concessions, it is only a question of time, and the same chance will be given to others, who will not refuse to avail themselves of it.

You see the beginning of the process already in such an event as the newly concluded commercial treaty between Canada and France. If we choose, it is still possible for us, not only to secure the preference we have in colonial markets, but to increase it. But if we do nothing, com-

mercial arrangements with other nations who are more far-sighted will gradually whittle that preference away. To my mind the action of Canada in the matter of that treaty, perfectly legitimate and natural though it be, is much more ominous and full of warning to us than the new Australian tariff, about which such an unjustifiable outcry has been made. Rates of duty can be lowered as easily as they can be raised, but the principle of preference once abandoned would be very difficult to revive. I am sorry that the Australians have found it necessary in their own interests to raise their duties, but I would rather see any of the British Dominions raise its duties and still give a preference to British goods, than lower its duties and take away that preference. Whatever duties may be imposed by Canada, Australia, or the other British Dominions, they will still remain great importers, and with the vast expansion in front of them their imports are bound to increase. They will still be excellent customers, and the point is that they should be our customers.

In the case of Australia, the actual extent of the preference accorded to British goods under the new tariff is not, as has been represented, of small value to us. It is of considerable value. But what is of far more importance, is the fact that Australia continues to adhere to the principle of preference. Moreover, Australia, following the example of Canada, has established an extensive free list for the benefit of this country. Let nobody say after this that Australia shows no family feeling. I for one am grateful to Australia, and I am grateful to that great Australian statesman, Mr. Deakin, for the way in which, in the teeth of discouragement from us, he has still persisted in making the principle of preferential trade within the Empire an essential feature of the Australian tariff.

Preference is vital to the future growth of British trade, but it is not only trade which is affected by it. The idea which lies at the root of it is that the scattered communities, which all own allegiance to the British Crown, should regard and treat one another not as strangers but as kins-

men, that, while each thinks first of its own interests, it should think next of the interests of the family, and of the rest of the world only after the family. That idea is the very corner-stone of Imperial unity. To my mind, any weakening of that idea, any practical departure from it, would be an incalculable loss to all of us. I should regard a readjustment of our own Customs duties with the object of maintaining that idea, even if such readjustment were of some immediate expense to ourselves, as I hope to show you that it would not be, as a most trifling and inconsiderable price to pay for a prize of infinite value. I am the last man to contend that preferential trade alone is a sufficient bond of Empire. But I do contend that the maintenance or creation of other bonds becomes very difficult, if in the vitally important sphere of commerce we are to make no distinction between our fellow-citizens across the seas and foreigners. Closer trade relations involve closer relations in all other respects. An advantage, even a slight advantage, to colonial imports in the great British market would tend to the development of the Colonies as compared with the foreign nations who compete with them. But the development of the British communities across the seas is of more value to us than an equivalent development of foreign countries. It is of more value to our trade, for, if there is one thing absolutely indisputable, it is that these communities buy ever so much more of us per head than foreign nations do. But it is not only a question of trade; it is a question of the future of our people. By encouraging the development of the British Dominions beyond the seas, we direct emigration to them in preference to foreign lands. We keep our people under the flag instead of scattering them all over the world. We multiply not merely our best customers but our fellow-citizens, our only sure and constant friends.

And now is there nothing we can do to help forward this great object? Is it really the case, as the Free Traders contend, that in order to meet the advances of the other British states and to give, as the saying is, preference for

preference, we should be obliged to make excessive sacrifices, and to place intolerable burdens on the people of this country? I believe that this is an absolute delusion. I believe that, if only we could shake off the fetters of a narrow and pedantic theory, and freely reshape our own system of import duties on principles of obvious common sense, we should be able at one and the same time to promote trade within the Empire, to strengthen our hands in commercial negotiations with foreign countries, and to render tardy justice to our home industries.

The Free Trader goes on the principle of placing duties on a very few articles only, articles, generally, of universal consumption, and of making those duties very high ones. Moreover, with the exception of alcohol, these articles are all things which we cannot produce ourselves. I do not say that the system has not some merits. It is easy to work and the cost of collection is moderate. But it has also great defects. The system is inelastic, for the duties being so few and so heavy, it is difficult to raise them in case of emergency without checking consumption. Moreover, the burden of the duties falls entirely on the people of this country, for the foreign importer, except in the case of alcoholic liquors, has no home producer to compete with, and so he simply adds the whole of the duty to the price of the article. Last, but not least, the burden is inequitably distributed. It would be infinitely fairer, as between different classes of consumers, to put a moderate duty on a large number of articles than to put an enormous duty on two or three. But from that fairer and more reasonable system we are at present debarred by our pedantic adhesion to the rule that no duty may be put on imported articles, unless an equivalent duty is put on articles of the same kind produced at home. Why, you may well ask, should we be bound by any such rule? I will tell you. It is because, unless we imposed such an equivalent duty, we should be favouring the British producer, and because under our present system, every other consideration has got to give way to this supreme law, the 'categorical impera-

tive' of the Free Trader, that we must not do anything which could by any possibility in the remotest degree benefit the British producer in his competition with the foreigner in our home market. It is from the obsession of this doctrine that the Tariff Reformer wishes to liberate our fiscal policy. He approaches this question free from any doctrinal prepossessions whatever. Granted that a certain number of millions have to be raised by Customs duties, he sees before him some five to six hundred millions of foreign imports on which to raise them, and so his first and very natural reflection is, that by distributing duties pretty equally over this vast mass of imported commodities, he could raise a very large revenue without greatly enhancing the price of anything. Our present system throws away, so to speak, the advantage of our vast and varied importation by electing to place the burden of duties entirely on very few articles. As against this system, the Tariff Reformer favours the principle of a widespread tariff, of making all foreign imports pay, but pay moderately, and he holds that it is no more than justice to the British producer that all articles brought to the British market should contribute to the cost of keeping it up. It is no answer to say that it is the British consumer who would pay the duty, for even if this were invariably true, which it is not, it leaves unaffected the question of fair play between the British producer and the foreign producer. The price of the home-made article is enhanced by the taxes which fall upon the home makers, and which are largely devoted to keeping up our great open market, but the price of the foreign article is not so enhanced, though it has the full benefit of the open market all the same. Moreover, the price of the home-made article is also enhanced by the many restrictions which we place, and rightly place, on home manufacture in the interests of the workers—restrictions as to hours, methods of working, sanitary conditions, and so forth — all excellent, all laudable, but expensive, and from which the foreign maker is often absolutely, and always comparatively, free. The Tariff

Reformer is all for the open market, but he is for fair play as between those who compete in it, and he holds that even cheapness ought not to be sought at the expense of unfairness to the British producer.

I say, then, that the Tariff Reformer starts with the idea of a moderate all-round tariff. But he is not going to ride his principle to death. He is essentially practical. There are some existing duties, like those on alcoholic liquors, the high rate of which is justified for other than fiscal reasons. He sees no reason to lower these duties. On the other hand, there are some articles, such as raw cotton, which compete with no British produce, and even a slight enhancement of the price of which might materially injure our export trade. The Tariff Reformer would place these on a free list, for he feels that, however strong may be the argument for moderate all-round duties as a guiding rule, it is necessary to admit exceptions even to the best of rules, and it is part of his creed that we are bound to study the actual effect of particular duties both upon ourselves and upon others. No doubt that means hard work, an intimate acquaintance with the details of our industry and trade, an eye upon the proceedings of foreign countries. A modern tariff, if it is to be really suitable to the requirements of the nation adopting it, must be the work of experts. But is that any argument against it? Are we less competent to make a thorough study of these questions than other people, as for instance the Germans, or are we too lazy? Free Traders make fun of a scientific tariff, but why should science be excluded from the domain of fiscal policy, especially when the necessity of it is so vigorously and so justly impressed upon us in every other field? It is not only the War Office which has got to get rid of antiquated prejudices and to open its eyes to what is going on in the world. Our financial departments might reasonably be asked to do the same—and they are quite equally capable, and I have no doubt equally willing to respond to such an appeal—instead of leaving the most thorough, the most comprehensive, and the most valuable inquiry

into the effects of import duties, which has ever been made in this country, to a private agency like the Tariff Commission.

I do not think it is necessary for me to point out how a widespread tariff, besides those other advantages which I have indicated, would strengthen our hands in commercial policy. In the first place, it would at once enable us to meet the advances of the other states of the Empire, and to make the British Empire in its commercial aspect a permanent reality. To do this it would not be necessary, nor do I think it would be right, to exempt goods from the British Dominions entirely from the duties to which similar goods coming from foreign lands are subject. Our purpose would be equally well served by doing what the Colonies do, and having two scales of duty, a lower one for the products of all British states and dependencies, a higher one for those of the outside world. The amount of this preference would be a matter of bargain to be settled by some future Imperial Conference, not foredoomed to failure, and preceded by careful preliminary investigation and negotiations. It might be twenty-five, or thirty-three, or even fifty per cent. And whatever it was, I think we should reserve the right also to give a preference, but never of the same amount, to any foreign country which was willing to give us some substantial equivalent. It need not be a general preference; it might be the removal or reduction of some particular duties. I may say I do not myself like the idea of engaging in tariff wars. I do not believe in prohibitive or penal tariffs. But I do believe in having something to give to those who treat us well, something to withhold from those who treat us badly. At present, as you are well aware, Great Britain is the one great nation which is treated with absolute disregard by foreign countries in framing their tariffs. They know that however badly they treat us they have nothing to lose by it, and so we go to the wall on every occasion.

And now, though there is a great deal more to be said, I feel I must not trespass much further on your patience.

But there is one objection to Tariff Reform which is constantly made, and which is at once so untrue and so damaging, that before sitting down, I should like to say a few words about it. We are told that this is an attempt to transfer the burden of a part of our taxation from the shoulders of the rich to those of the poor. If that were true, it would be fatal to Tariff Reform, and I for one would have nothing to do with it. But it is not true. There is no proposal to reduce, and I believe there is no possibility of reducing, the burden which at present falls on the shoulders of the upper and middle classes in the shape of direct taxation. On the other hand, I do not believe there is much room for increasing it—though I think it can be increased in one or two directions—without consequences which the poorer classes would be the first to feel. Excise duties, which are mainly paid by those classes, are already about as high as they can be. It follows that for any increase of revenue, beyond the ordinary growth arising from increase of wealth and population, you must look, at least to a great extent, to Customs duties. And the tendency of the time is towards increased expenditure, all of it, mind you—and I do not complain of the fact—due to the effort to improve the condition of the mass of the people. It is thus no question of shifting existing burdens, it is a question of distributing the burden of new expenditure of which the mass of the people will derive the benefit. And if that new expenditure must, as I think I have shown, be met, at least in large part, by Customs duties, which method of raising these duties is more in the interest of the poorer classes—our present system, which enhances enormously the price of a few articles of universal consumption, like tea and sugar and tobacco, or a tariff spread over a much greater number of articles at a much lower rate? Beyond all doubt or question, the mass of the people would be better off under the latter system. Even assuming—as I will for the sake of argument, though I do not admit it—that the British consumer pays the whole of the duty on imported foreign goods competing

with British goods, is it not evident that the poorer classes of the community would pay a smaller proportion of Customs duties under a tariff which included a great number of foreign manufactured articles, at present entirely free, and largely the luxuries of the rich, than they do, when Customs duties are restricted to a few articles of universal consumption ?

And that is at the same time the answer to the misleading, and often dishonest, outcry about 'taxing the food of the people,' about the big loaf and little loaf, and all the rest of it. The construction of a sensible all-round tariff presents many difficulties, but there is one difficulty which it does not present, and that is the difficulty of so adjusting your duties that the total proportion of them falling upon the wage-earning classes shall not be increased. I for one regard such an adjustment as a postulate in any scheme of Tariff Reform. And just one other argument —and I recommend it especially to those working-class leaders who are so vehement in their denunciation of Tariff Reform. Is it of no importance to the people, whom they especially claim to represent, that our fiscal policy should lean so heavily in favour of the foreign and against the British producer ? If they regard that as a matter of indifference, I think they will come to find in time that the mass of the working classes do not agree with them. But be that as it may, it is certain that I, for one, do not advocate Tariff Reform in the interests of the rich, but in the interests of the whole nation, and therefore necessarily of the working classes, who are the majority of the nation.

GUILDFORD.—October 29, 1907

*A Constructive Policy*

[At a dinner held under the auspices of the Surrey Liberal Unionist Association and in reply to the toast of 'The Unionist Cause.']

I am very sensible of the honour of being called on to reply for the Unionist cause, but I approach the task with some diffidence, not to say trepidation. I feel very conscious

that I am not a very good specimen of a party man. It is not that I do not hold strong opinions on many public questions—in fact, that is the very trouble. My opinions are too strong to fit well into any recognised programme. I suffer from an inveterate habit, which is partly congenital, but which has been developed by years spent in the service of the Crown, of looking at public questions from other than party points of view. And I am too old to unlearn it.

For a man so constituted there is evidently only a limited rôle in political life. But he may have his uses all the same, if you take him for what he is, and not for what he is not, and does not pretend to be. If he does not speak with the weight and authority of a party leader, he is at least free from the embarrassments by which a party leader is beset, and unhampered by the caution which a party leader is bound to exercise. He commits nobody but himself, and therefore he can afford to speak with a bluntness which is denied to those whose utterances commit many thousands of other people. And I am not sure whether the present moment is not one at which the unconventional treatment of public questions may not be specially useful; so, whether it be as an independent Unionist or as a friendly outsider—in whichever light you like to regard me—I venture to contribute my mite to the discussion.

Having now made my position clear, I will at once plunge *in medias res* with a few artless observations. You hear all this grumbling which is going on just now against the Unionist leader. Well, gentlemen, a party which is in low water always does grumble at its leader. I have known this sort of thing happen over and over again in my own lifetime. And the consequence is, it is all like water on a duck's back to me; it makes no impression on me whatsoever. I remember as long back as the late sixties and early seventies the Conservative party were ceaselessly grumbling at Lord Beaconsfield, then Mr. Disraeli, right up to his greatest victory and the commencement of his longest tenure of power—almost up to

the moment when he became the permanent idol of the Conservative party. I remember how the Liberals grumbled at Mr. Gladstone from 1873 and 1874, almost up to the opening of the Midlothian campaign. Again, I remember how the Conservatives grumbled at Lord Salisbury, from the first moment of his accession to the leadership right up to 1885. I can recall as well as if it were yesterday a young Tory friend of mine—he has become a distinguished man since, and I am not going to give him away—telling me, who was at that time a Liberal, in the year of grace 1883 or 1884, that it was absolutely hopeless for the Tory party ever to expect to come back into power with such a leader as Lord Salisbury. He called him a 'Professor.' He said, 'No doubt he is a very able man and an excellent speaker, but he is a man of science. He has no popular gifts whatever. There is not a ghost of a chance of a Conservative victory so long as he is in command.' Yet this was not more than two years before Lord Salisbury commenced a series of premierships which kept him, for some thirteen and a half years out of seventeen, at the helm of the State.

With all these experiences to look back upon, it is really impossible for me to be much affected by the passing wave of dissatisfaction with Mr. Balfour. Men of first-rate ability and character are rare. Still rarer are men who, having those qualities, also have the knack of compelling the attention and respect even of a hostile House of Commons. When a party possesses a leader with all these gifts, it is not likely to change him in a hurry.

But if I refuse to take a gloomy view of the Unionist leadership, I must admit that I am not altogether an optimist about the immediate prospects of Unionism. There is no doubt a bright side to the picture as well as a less encouraging one. The bright side, from the party point of view, is afforded by the hopeless chaos of opinion in the ranks of our opponents—by the total absence of any clear conviction or definite line whatever in the counsels of the Government, which causes Ministers to dash wildly

from measure to measure in endeavouring to satisfy first one section and then another section of their motley following, and which prevents them from ever giving really adequate attention to any one of their proposals.

I am not speaking of Ministers individually. Granted that some of them have done excellent work at the heads of their several departments—I think it would not be fair to deny that—I am thinking of their collective policy, and especially of their legislative efforts. For monuments of clumsy opportunism, commend me to the legislative failures, and, for the matter of that, to most of the legislative achievements, of the last two years.

So far so good. Unionists cannot complain of what the Government is doing for them. And on the negative side of policy—in their duty as a mere Opposition—their course is clear. It is a fundamental article of their faith to maintain the authority of the Imperial Parliament in Ireland. But that authority can be set aside by the toleration of lawlessness just as much, and in a worse way, than by the repeal of the Union. And such toleration is the rule to-day. There may be no violent crime, but there is open and widespread defiance of the law and interference with the elementary rights of law-abiding people. It is a demoralising state of affairs, and one to which no good citizen in any part of the United Kingdom, however little he may be personally affected by it, can afford to be indifferent. Once let it be granted that any popular movement, which is not strong enough to obtain an alteration of the law by regular means, can simply set the law aside in practice, and you are at the beginning of general anarchy.

Unionists have to fight for a restoration of the respect for law in Ireland in the interest of the whole kingdom. And they may have to fight also, it appears, against the abrogation of our existing constitution in favour of a system of quinquennial dictatorships. For that and nothing else is involved in the proposal to reduce the House of Lords to impotence and put nothing in its place. I am

not concerned to represent the present constitution of the House of Lords as perfect. I have always been of opinion that a more representative and therefore a stronger second chamber was desirable. But that we can afford to do without any check on the House of Commons, especially since the removal of all checks upon the power of those who from time to time control the House of Commons, to rush through any measures they please without the possibility of an appeal to the people—that is a proposition which no man with any knowledge of history or any respect for constitutional government can possibly defend. To resist such a proposal as that is not fighting for a party; it is not fighting for a class. It is fighting for the stability of society, for the fundamental rights of the whole nation.

I say, then, that on the negative side, in the things it is called upon to resist, the Unionist party is strong and fortunate. But are we to be content with that? Should we not all like to feel that we appealed for the confidence of the people on the merits of our own policy, and not merely on the demerits of our opponents? That, I take it, is the feeling at the bottom of what men are saying on all hands just now—that the Unionist party ought to have a constructive policy. Now, if by a constructive policy is meant a string of promises, a sort of Newcastle programme, then I can well imagine any wise statesmen, especially if they happened to be in Opposition, thinking twice before they committed themselves to it. But if by a constructive policy is meant a definite set of principles, a clear attitude to the questions which most agitate the public mind, a sympathetic grasp of popular needs, and a readiness to indicate the extent to which, and the lines on which, you think it possible and desirable to satisfy them—then I agree that the Unionist party ought to have such a policy. And I venture to say that, if it has such a policy, the fact is not yet sufficiently apparent to the popular mind, or perhaps I should say, speaking as one of the populace, to my mind.

Many people think that it is sufficient for the purpose—

that it is possible to conduct a victorious campaign with the single watchword 'Down with Socialism.' Well, I am not fond of mere negatives. I do not like fighting an abstract noun. My objection to anti-Socialism as a platform is that Socialism means so many different things. On this point I agree with Mr. Asquith. I will wait to denounce Socialism till I see what form it takes. Sometimes it is synonymous with robbery, and to robbery, open or veiled, boldly stalking in the face of day or hiding itself under specious phrases, Unionists are, as a matter of course, opposed. But mere fidelity to the eighth Commandment is not a constructive policy, and Socialism is not necessarily synonymous with robbery. Correctly used, the word only signifies a particular view of the proper relation of the State to its citizens—a tendency to substitute public for private ownership, or to restrict the freedom of individual enterprise in the interests of the public. But there are some forms of property which we all admit should be public and not private, and the freedom of individual enterprise is already limited by a hundred laws. Socialism and Individualism are opposing principles, which enter in various proportions into the constitution of every civilised society; it is merely a question of degree. One community is more socialistic than another. The same community is more socialistic at one time than at another. This country is far more socialistic than it was fifty years ago, and for most of the changes in that direction the Unionist and the Tory party are responsible. The Factory Acts are one instance; free education is another. The danger, as it seems to me, of the Unionist party going off on a crusade against Socialism is that in the heat of that crusade it may neglect, or appear to neglect, those social evils, of which honest Socialism is striving, often, no doubt, by unwise means, to effect a cure. If the Unionist party did that, it would be unfaithful to its own best traditions from the days of *Sybil* and *Coningsby* to the present time.

The true antidote to revolutionary Socialism is practical

social reform. That is no claptrap phrase—although it may sound so ; there is a great historical truth behind it. The revolutionary Socialist—I call him revolutionary because he wants to alter the whole basis of society—would like to get rid of all private property, except, perhaps, our domestic pots and pans. He is averse from private enterprise. He is going absurdly too far ; but what gave birth to his doctrine ? The abuse of the rights of private property, the cruelty and the failure of the scramble for gain, which mark the reign of a one-sided Individualism. If we had not gone much too far in one direction, we should not have had this extravagant reaction in the other. But do not let us lose our heads in face of that reaction. While resisting the revolutionary propaganda, let us be more, and not less, strenuous in removing the causes of it.

You may think I am now talking pure Radicalism. Well, but it is not to the objects which many Radicals have at heart that we, as Unionists, need take exception. Why should we make them a present of those good objects ? Old age pensions ; the multiplication of small landholders and, let me add, landowners ; the resuscitation of agriculture ; and, on the other hand, better housing in our crowded centres ; town planning ; sanitary conditions of labour ; the extinction of sweating ; the physical training of the people ; continuation schools—these and all other measures necessary to preserve the stamina of the race and develop its intelligence and productive power—have we not as good a right to regard these as our objects, aye, and in many cases a better right, than the supporters of the Government have ?

It is not these objects which we deprecate. On the contrary, they have our ardent sympathy. What we do deprecate is the spirit in which they are so often preached and pursued. No progress is going to be made—quite the contrary—by stirring up class hatred or trying to rob Peter in order to pay Paul. It is not true that you cannot benefit one class without taking from another class —still less true that by taking from one you necessarily

benefit another. The national income, the sum total of all our productive activities, is capable of being enormously increased or diminished by wise or foolish policy. For it does not only depend on the amount of capital and labour. A number of far subtler factors enter into the account—science, organisation, energy, credit, confidence, the spirit in which men set about their business. The one thing which would be certain to diminish that income, and to recoil on all of us, would be that war of classes which many people seem anxious to stir up. Nothing could be more fatal to prosperity, and to the fairest hopes of social progress, than if the great body of the upper and middle classes of the community had cause to regard that progress as indissolubly associated with an attack upon themselves. And that is why, if reforms such as I have indicated are costly—as they will be costly—you must find some better way of providing for them than by merely giving another turn to the income-tax screw, or just adding so much per cent. to the estate duty.

From my point of view, social reform is a national affair. All classes benefit by it, not only those directly affected. And therefore all should contribute according to their means. I do not in any way object to the rich being made to contribute, even for purposes in which they are not directly interested. What I do object to is, that the great body of the people should not contribute to them. It is thoroughly vicious in principle to divide the nation, as many of the Radical and Labour men want to divide it, into two sections—a majority which only calls the tune, and a minority which only pays the piper.

I own I am aghast at the mean opinion which many politicians seem to have of the mass of their working fellow-countrymen, when they approach them with this crude sort of bribery, offering them everything for nothing, always talking to them of their claims upon the State, and never of their duties towards it. This is a democratic country. It is their State and their Empire—theirs to possess, theirs to control, but theirs also to support and to

defend. And I for one have such faith in the common sense and fair-mindedness of the British people that I believe you have only to convince them that you have a really sound national policy, and they will rally to it, without having to be bought by promises of a penny off this and twopence off the other—a sort of appeal, I regret to say, which is not only confined to Radical orators, but in which Unionists also are sometimes too apt to indulge.

And now, gentlemen, only one word in conclusion—a brief and inadequate reference to a vast subject, but one to which I am at all times and seasons specially bound to refer. After all, my chief quarrel with the Radical party —not with all of them—I do not say that for a moment— but with a far too large and influential section—is their anti-patriotism. I use the word advisedly. It is not that they are unpatriotic in the sense of having no affection for their country. It is that they are deliberately and on principle—I do not asperse their motives ; I do not question their sincerity and conviction—anti-patriotic, opposed to national as distinct from cosmopolitan ideals. They are not zealous for national defence ; they have no faith in the Empire ; they love to show their impartiality by taking sides against their own country ; they object to their children being taught respect for the flag. But we Unionists are not cosmopolitans but Britons. We have no envy or ill-will towards other nations ; a man is not a worse neighbour because he loves his own family. But we do hold that it is not our business to look after others. It is our business to look after ourselves and our dependencies, and the great kindred communities who own allegiance to the British flag. We want to draw closer to them, to stand together ; and we believe that the strength and the unity of the British Empire are of vital and practical importance to every citizen. In all our propaganda, and in all our policy, let us continue to give that great principle a foremost place.

## EDINBURGH—NOVEMBER 13, 1907.

### *Geography and Statecraft*

[The Inaugural Address of the year delivered before the Royal Scottish Geographical Society in Edinburgh, the Lord Justice-General—Lord Dunedin—presiding.]

THERE is one respect certainly—no doubt there are many others, but they are less material to the present point—in which I am at a great disadvantage compared with the distinguished men who have on previous occasions delivered this Inaugural Address. My predecessors have all been men who, either by virtue of their scientific eminence, or of their practical achievements as explorers of the earth or air, might justly lay claim to the title of Masters in Geography. I can advance no such claim; and while I am deeply sensible of the honour of being permitted to address this learned society, I am a little frightened at my own boldness in availing myself of the opportunity which your extreme indulgence has afforded me.

My excuse must be that, if I have no right to call myself a geographer, I am at least a firm believer in the value of geographical studies, and in their educational as well as their practical value. And so I venture to offer myself as a witness on the side of your science in the controversy, which is still going on, as to its right to a place among the recognised branches of the higher learning. If that question were to be submitted to a jury of men whose lives had been mainly devoted to affairs of State, I should have no doubt as to the verdict. I do not say that the opinion of men of this class should be alone decisive, but it is at least of some value. And I am confident that there are very few of them who would not agree with me in assigning to geography, as now pursued and taught, a high place among the studies which go to make up what the Germans call *Staatswissenschaft*, a term for which I know no exact English equivalent, but which we may perhaps translate into 'Political Science' or the 'Political Sciences.'

Not that I have any wish to insist on including geography

among the political or moral sciences as distinct from the physical—if you will forgive my using these somewhat clumsy and inadequate but still necessary labels. Indeed it is one of the strong points about geography, that it is not easy to classify in this fashion. It possesses, as has been truly said by one of its votaries, a synthetic value, or, to put it in simpler language, it forms an important link in the great chain of knowledge, and constitutes a meeting-point of the moral and physical sciences. It is one of the corner-pillars, if I may so express myself, of the Temple of Knowledge. You have only to think how closely it touches geology, and for the matter of that, botany and zoology also, on the one side, and history on the other. If I confine myself to-night to one of its aspects, I must not be thought to ignore or undervalue the others.

So much to prevent misunderstanding. And now only one more prefatory observation. The claim which I think geography can confidently advance to-day to an honourable and important place among the sciences could perhaps not have been advanced with anything like the same force one hundred or even fifty years ago. For the right of any study to such a place depends, I take it, on two things: the importance of its subject-matter, and the manner in which the study is conducted. Now as to the importance of the subject-matter of geography there could never be any dispute. But its methods were not always calculated to command equal respect. When I think of the maps, the text-books, and, worse still, the geographical lessons of my own childhood, I recall things to which the term 'scientific' could by no legitimate stretch of language have been applied. Great indeed has been the progress in the methods of geographical study during my own life-time, though no doubt the beginning of improvement dates further back. For something like a century a series of eminent men, from Humboldt onwards, men imbued with the highest scientific ideals, have been busy interpreting and systematising the ever-increasing mass of geographical knowledge. If our own country has been especially

rich in great explorers, other nations, and above all the Germans, have helped to raise the status of geography by a philosophic treatment of the new as well as the old material. And it cannot now be long before geography obtains on all hands that full recognition as a science, to which its modern developments so amply entitle it.

But I am not going to attempt to trace the history of those developments to-night. My humbler task is to try and illustrate the value of geographical knowledge, and of the geographical habit of mind, in the sphere of government and administration. We have had quite recently a brilliant example of what that knowledge and that habit of mind, when wedded to history and to a practical experience of great affairs, are capable of producing, in the lecture on 'Frontiers,' which was delivered at Oxford some ten days ago by Lord Curzon. Or, to take another instance, which touches more nearly the field of my own personal experience, there have been few State papers published this year which rival in interest Lord Selborne's *Review of the Present Mutual Relations of the British South African Colonies*. The memorandum, in which the present High Commissioner discusses those relations, is substantially a plea, and a very earnest and effective plea, for Federation. It would be quite beyond the scope of this address to examine that plea in detail, but there is one point about it to which I wish to call attention, because it is so apt an illustration of the subject we are considering to-night. The point to which I refer is the great importance which is attached, and rightly attached, in this memorandum to purely geographical considerations. The argument for Federation, strong in any case, on racial, economic, and other grounds, becomes absolutely irresistible when you consider the physical conformation of the country. I am not thinking merely of the contiguity of the several states. Two countries may be contiguous and yet sharply divided by some natural obstacle. Over and over again in history such obstacles have delayed or prevented the political union even of kindred communities. But in the case of South

Africa there are no such obstacles at all. In only one instance, that of the Basutoland enclave, does the political boundary correspond to any extent with natural facts. Basutoland is bounded for more than half its circumference by formidable mountain barriers, and has in all respects a more homogeneous character than any other South African territory. But almost all other South African frontiers are, from the geographical point of view, quite negligible, indeed in some cases quite absurd. They are the result of historical accidents, not to say of political blunders; in some cases, perhaps, of justifiable political expedients, but never of physical factors of any real importance. No doubt there are striking physical contrasts between different portions of South Africa. I shall have to refer to them presently, and they greatly reinforce my argument, for no statesmanship can be successful which fails to take account of them. But they stand in no relation whatever to the political divisions. Indeed it would almost seem as if a perverse destiny had chosen to unite the disparate, as it has certainly sometimes divided the wholly similar and consanguineous, in carving out the strange amorphous lumps of territory which constitute the South African states.

In saying this, I must not be regarded as contending that it is any longer possible altogether to ignore these political divisions. History has her rights as well as geography, and we cannot escape from the consequences of the accidents, the blunders or the devices of the past. 'Le mieux est l'ennemi du bien,' and in attempting at this time of day a complete fusion of the South African states, even assuming such a fusion to be desirable, statesmen might easily imperil the success of that strong movement towards closer union which, wisely directed, is bound to be productive of most beneficent results. But I will say no more on this point. To do so would be to allow myself to be drawn into a political discussion wholly alien to my present object. That object is merely to consider some of the most striking physical idiosyncrasies of South Africa, and to consider

them as illustrating the necessity of constant close attention to the geographical factor on the part of statesmen.

I fear that the limits of my time will hardly allow me to do more than take a very cursory glance at those idiosyncrasies, and that my theme may suffer in intelligibility and in interest from excessive compression. But there are at least a good many of my hearers who will be able to fill up from their own knowledge some of the many important features of the landscape, which I must pass by unnoticed in my breathless dash from the slopes of Table Mountain to the southern shores of Tanganyika. For that, and nothing less, is the extent of territory which has to be passed under review. I see that that distinguished traveller, Mr. E. F. Knight, in his recently published book on *Over-Sea Britain*, defines South Africa as 'all Africa to the south of the Congo basin.' I do not know that in a strictly geographical sense that is not rather too liberal a definition. To my mind the southern edge of the basin of the Zambesi is a better dividing line, from the point of view of physical conditions, than the southern edge of the basin of the Congo. But there can be no doubt that, politically and administratively, South Africa does at present straddle on right up to the latter point. And this, indeed, is one of the greatest drawbacks of British South Africa—its unmanageable shape, the great interminable wedge driven from south to north into the heart of the continent with such inadequate outlets to east and west. You go from latitude 34° to latitude 8°, from a climate of South European mildness to the heart of the tropics, a distance of more than two thousand miles; but for three-fourths of the distance on one side, and for more than two-thirds on both sides, you are flanked by foreign states. Where was geography when we refused to look after Namaqualand and Damaraland, and did not think it worth while to give thirty thousand pounds for Delagoa Bay? The courage, the enterprise, and the farsightedness of individual Britons have indeed done wonders to counteract the laches of national policy. Livingstone, Rhodes, John Mackenzie—

to name only the foremost—have left their mark upon the political map of Africa to a far greater extent than even the ablest and most energetic officers of the British Crown. But the shouldering of national responsibilities by private citizens, however splendid as a display of human courage and energy, is not without its drawbacks. Our vast South African dominion bears in its configuration, no less than in its haphazard administrative arrangements, the traces of the unscientific spirit, in which Governments have trifled with the problems which only systematic governmental action can adequately solve. The extension of British authority from the Orange River to Tanganyika has been accomplished by the most extraordinary series of makeshifts in the history of the world. Many of the resulting tangles will, no doubt, be straightened out by Federation, when it comes. But, behind the question of the Federation of British South Africa properly so called, complicated in itself, yet at least engaging the thoughts of all the ablest men whom the country possesses, lies the question of the future of her vast tropical annexe—not *South* Africa at all in a geographical sense, though now administratively tagged on to her—and that is a matter to which no one, whether in South Africa or in Great Britain, seems disposed to give the slightest attention. Yet for geographers it is surely full of interest. The causes which have led to the phenomenally rapid advance of the outposts of Empire in Southern Central Africa, and the consequences involved in it, are so striking an illustration of the interaction of geographical and political influences, that I venture to direct your attention to them for a few minutes.

The dominant physical fact about South and South-Central Africa is the great irregular tableland which constitutes so large a portion of it, and which carries the climate of the temperate zone into the heart of the tropics. The great average elevation of the country, with its vast stretches of undulating but not often mountainous high land, is the cause of most of the distinctive features of its life. Historically, economically, politically, nothing is really intelligible,

as long as the significance of that primary fact is not fully grasped. In South Africa, men of European race thrive and multiply exceedingly in latitudes which are generally fatal or debilitating to the white man. Their splendid physique is due to the bracing air of these large expanses of lofty open country. But inasmuch as the high table-land is not the whole of South Africa, but is flanked and intersected by regions of lower altitude, which are tropical or sub-tropical not only in latitude but in climate, the white race is here inextricably intermingled with coloured races, equally prolific, equally at home in the country, which show no signs of succumbing to the European impact. Indeed, in one respect the Bantu tribes, or at any rate the finest of them, have the advantage over men of European origin, for they seem to flourish alike in the lower and the higher altitudes; whereas, except in the extreme south, the white man is never at his best on the low ground. From this intermingling of alien races, ranging from the most highly civilised to the almost barbarous, have arisen social and political problems of the greatest complexity, and all South African history is woven on that woof.

But I must not be led astray by the innumerable topics of interest which the high plateau suggests. My present concern is with a single feature of it—the fact, namely, that it is most easily ascended from the southern end. Even the central and northern portions are, as a rule, more accessible from the south, despite the greater distances, than they are over much shorter distances from the east and west. For from the west, though the slopes are favourable, the intense aridity of the country makes progress difficult or impossible, and on the east there is a tremendous mountain barrier to be climbed. No doubt that barrier is not and never was impassable, and in recent times it has been crossed by no fewer than three lines of railway, the existence of which will greatly affect the course of future development. But even with the railway, and much more before the railway, the approach from the south was incomparably easier and more natural than from the east. It is

like the difference between climbing a steep ladder and walking up a comparatively easy flight of steps. Add to this the fact that the European settlers of the south had their base in a favourable climate (for only on the extreme south and south-west is the low-lying coast-belt temperate and healthy for men of white race), while the European settlers on the east had their base on a hot and humid shore. And bear in mind, further, that the settlers of the south belonged to sturdy Teutonic races, in whom the tendency to expansion was still strong, while the settlers on the east, if they could be called settlers at all, belonged to a small nation in which, despite its glorious past, the exploring and colonising impulse was exhausted.

There you have, of course only in the broadest outline, the causes which led to the colonisation of South Africa from the south, the forward pressure of European immigration, if I may so express myself, on vertical rather than on horizontal lines. It was up the series of lofty terraces, which lead from the south and south-west to the centre of the great plateau, that Europe first invaded South Africa, and then spread, as it is still spreading, its colonists to right and left over the most eligible portions of it. It was a great continuous northward movement, no doubt with a considerable lilt, especially in its early stages, to the east, that is to the better watered and therefore more fertile side of the tableland, but still in its general direction a broad wave sweeping steadily towards the Polar Star. On and on, ' with painful steps and slow,' went the pioneers of European civilisation, until they could just discern on the far horizon the constellations which had shone over the heads of their fathers in their ancient homes—strange constellations to most of them, who had looked up since infancy at Achernar and Canopus and the Pointers and the Southern Cross.

At first, as I have said, in the days of the ox-wagon, the movement was very slow. It took two centuries before the most northerly outpost of continuous European settlement had reached the edge of the tropics, and even

then that settlement was very thin and partial, with great bordering expanses of wilderness or of barbarism, and with long distances between the principal centres of population —all circumstances tending to estrange the settlers from the old European lands, the cradles of their race, and even from one another. But the great point is, that by the middle of last century, just two hundred years after Van Riebeeck had established the first permanent settlement at the foot of Table Mountain, the invasion from the south had got a real grip of the centre of the great tableland, and was twelve hundred miles on its way to the heart of Africa, while the European planters in the east had little more than a nominal hold even of the coast-land, and had made no impression on the elevated interior of Africa at all.

And then came the railway, by far the most potent of modern inventions in transforming the life of mankind, potent and revolutionising everywhere, but most of all in thinly peopled and newly settled countries, and, among these, of incomparable potency in South Africa, owing to the vast distances which separate its chief centres of European settlement, and to its almost total lack of navigable waterways. Great as is the influence of the iron road everywhere, and innumerable as are its effects, there is no portion, I believe, of the whole habitable globe in which its importance, compared with that of all other factors, is so great, so overshadowing, as in South Africa. But for the first twenty or thirty years railway development in South Africa, which then moved at a snail's pace, compared with the tremendous rush of recent years, was busy in linking up the coast ports with comparatively near and long-established inland places. If it followed the course of northern expansion at all, it followed it at first for a special reason, namely, in order to get at those centres of mineral wealth which happened—a most momentous fact—to be situate far inland, far to the north, right on the line of that advance of which I have been speaking. And so it came about that when, some five-and-twenty years ago, the great scramble for Africa began; when the European

nations which were already in possession of long-neglected strips of the African coast woke up, and fresh European nations dashed forward to secure the yet unappropriated parts of it; when one and all, old occupants and newcomers, began to push on their boundaries with might and main from every available starting-point, until they met and not infrequently collided in the centre—at this critical juncture the railway from Cape Town was already at Kimberley, upwards of five hundred miles on the way to the north, and, more important still, on the crown of the tableland, with the great gradual climb already accomplished, and hundreds upon hundreds of miles of comparatively level going in front of it. By virtue of that railway, coming from the oldest British port, and passing in its whole course through settled British territory, Great Britain had a big start in the race for Southern Central Africa, just as by virtue of her occupation of Egypt she had a similar start in the race for the Northern Central regions, which contain the head-waters of the Nile.

Continuous settlement for twelve hundred miles from south to north and a railway, not indeed so far advanced as that, but still far advanced, and above all, having overcome the chief difficulty of all railways from the coast to the centre of Africa, the great climb; these were the advantages which the owners of the southern littoral possessed, as compared with those of the eastern and western coasts, in their converging movements towards the centre of the sub-continent. And thus British authority was pushed forward from the southern extremity of Africa up more than a third of its whole length before other Powers, advancing from the east and west, brought their frontiers together in front of it and so finally barred the road for any further advance. From Cape Town to the furthermost point of North-Eastern Rhodesia is more than two thousand miles as the crow flies, and I need not say how many more as the traveller has to go. But the whole breadth of Africa at that point is only about seventeen hundred miles, and the distance from the borders of North-Eastern Rhodesia

to the nearest point on the sea-coast is only about four hundred. No doubt it is true that this distant, protruding spur of our vast South and South-Central African dominion has been approached rather from the east, by the Zambesi and Shire Valleys, than up the central plateau. But it is also true that our authority in that corner would hardly have been established, and could with difficulty be maintained, if the country between the four lakes, Nyassa, Tanganyika, Bangweolo, and Mweru, were not connected at its south-western angle with that huge oblong block of British Colonies and Protectorates and Spheres of Influence, which now stretches from Cape Town to Katanga. And to the boundary of Katanga, at any rate, we have got by the direct northward movement, though the distance thither is just twice as far that way as it is from either the eastern or the western coast.

That is the story in its simplest form. Of course in its details it is vastly more complicated. And there is one detail of such importance, that even in this hasty review I must just refer to it. When the scramble for Africa began in the early eighties, Great Britain, owing to past misunderstandings and mistakes, and to a policy which, among other things, ignored geography, and tried to separate the inseparable, had lost control of the more important—eastern —half of the northward march of European colonisation, and its most advanced posts were no longer on British territory. In 1882-83, the Boer Republic on our right flank had pushed far ahead of the furthest limit of British authority and was some four hundred miles nearer to the centre of Africa. And the fear was that foreign Powers, availing themselves of the split between Boer and Briton, might use the Transvaal to bar the road to the further advance of British influence and civilisation. It was under the impulse of that fear that Rhodes made the great dash, or rather the series of great dashes, to the north, which have resulted in the extraordinary elongation of the British portion of South Africa.

First came the march of the pioneers into Mashonaland

in 1890, which interposed a belt of British settlement between the northern Transvaal and the Zambesi. Then followed in 1893 the Matabele War, and the subjection of the whole country up to that river. These events gave us the great regions now known as Southern Rhodesia. But Rhodes could not rest content with the boundary of the Zambesi. He was haunted by the thought of the rapidity with which all the vacant spaces of the world were being appropriated by one European Power or another, and he was bent on preserving as large an area as possible for his own countrymen. And so, before his death in 1902, despite failures of his own seeking, and interruptions for which he was not to blame—despite the Raid and the Rinderpest, the Matabele Rebellion and the great Boer War—he had succeeded in acquiring certain large trading and administrative rights beyond the Zambesi, up to the very confines of the Congo Free State, and in inducing the British Government to throw its ægis over them. These are the countries now known as North-Western and North-Eastern Rhodesia, and, like Southern Rhodesia, virtually incorporated in the British Empire, though no doubt in a much more rudimentary stage in respect of development and administration. It had taken more than two hundred years to carry European authority from Cape Town to Kimberley. It took less than twenty to advance it from Kimberley northwards to a distance twice as great—a colossal achievement, which we owe to the energy, the daring, and the geographical imagination of a single man.

And all the time the railway was being pushed forward with unexampled speed, as it has been since his death—not much less than a hundred miles a year on an average. Indeed, without the railway following close behind, anything like effective occupation would have been impossible. It is the fashion just now to decry the rapid extension of railways through these thinly peopled and as yet unproductive regions, and to condemn them if they do not pay in a commercial sense. And no doubt the railways of Rhodesia, though they have been constructed with remark-

able economy, will be some time before they can stand that test. But then it is an absurd test to apply to railways in a country where there are no other means of communication, where they are the only roads, the indispensable conditions alike of economic progress and of civilised government, where they are creating the development which it is their ultimate destiny to serve. Were the Roman roads expected to pay in a commercial sense ? If railways were never to be built into the wilderness, the wilderness would remain what it was for all the centuries before railways were invented to conquer it.

And now, perhaps, enough has been said to enable us to make a fair estimate of this latest stage in the European invasion of Africa from the south, to realise the causes of its feverish haste, the boldness of its conception, and at the same time its inevitable defects. It has been a movement along natural lines, but unduly accelerated by accidental political causes. But for the scramble for Africa, even the restless genius of Rhodes might not have gone so fast or so far. And while it is impossible not to admire the spectacle of this private citizen—for after the end of 1895 he ceased to be even Prime Minister of the Cape—undertaking and financing a great enterprise of State, ensuring the concurrence of a reluctant Government by saving it all expense, and paying his way by a mixed appeal to the speculative instincts and the patriotic ambitions of his countrymen, it is no disparagement to him to say that this is not the best imaginable way in which an empire can be built. He followed the only lines possible under the circumstances. He spent his life in the task. Our gratitude is due to him for the vast opportunities which he created or preserved for us. But Southern and Northern Rhodesia alike will long bear the traces of the strange expedients which had to be adopted in getting them started, and a great many problems will have to be solved before either of them can be satisfactorily fitted into the framework of South Africa or of the Empire.

On the future of Southern Rhodesia I have no intention

to dwell. By however complicated a process, it is bound some day to become a part of self-governing South Africa. But its great tropical annexe presents features of a different character, and sooner or later we shall have to apply Mr. Haldane's prescription and do a little thinking about them. And when we do, a strange tangle of interests, and a difficult choice of alternative courses, will come up for consideration. First of all there are native rights, and in one part of the country at least—in Barotseland—the yet surviving, if truncated, authority of a native monarch who is one of the most meritorious of his kind. Then there are the commercial and administrative rights of the Chartered Company, the real rulers of the land. But they are not absolute rulers, for the Imperial Government has, through the High Commissioner, very wide and substantial if somewhat indefinite powers of control. And lastly, there rises in the distance the vision of a Federated South Africa, which may wish to sweep away all of these, and to govern the whole region free from any interference, as Tembuland and Pondoland are governed by Cape Colony, and as Zululand is governed by Natal.

And no doubt there is much to be said for this solution, which is likely to commend itself, when the time comes, to any British Government, because it would be such a saving of trouble. But there is also much to be said against it, especially from the South African point of view. If I were a South African statesman, there are certain considerations connected with the gravest of all South African problems which might give me pause. South Africa has got her own native population to digest. It is not that they are absolutely so very numerous. The country could easily carry a much larger population, not only of whites but of blacks, and would economically, at least for the present, be all the better for a greater supply of black labour. But if not absolutely very numerous, the blacks at any rate greatly outnumber the whites, and they are increasing, to all appearance, quite as fast. Can it be to the interest of South Africa to annex to herself another great

region peopled wholly by blacks, and thus permanently to increase the disproportion of the two races within her confines? It may be said that the healthy high plateau continues beyond the Zambesi, that white men will be able to make their permanent home there in appreciable numbers, and that therefore the distinctive features of South African life will be reproduced in those distant regions, and the whole country from the Southern Ocean to the Congo basin assume in time a more or less homogeneous character. For my own part, I greatly doubt the likelihood of such a result. The power of altitude to counteract the effects of latitude is an interesting question, about which no man can as yet afford to speak very positively. I can imagine a Johannesburg on the Equator. I think it quite possible that there are in British East Africa considerable tracts which will carry a permanent white population. But one has yet to be satisfied that, with the exception of a few favoured spots, the same can be said of North-Western or North-Eastern Rhodesia. They seem rather to present the distinguishing features of a tropical colony or plantation, and such a colony is ever an ill-assorted yokefellow for those of the European self-governing type. Southern Rhodesia, or, at any rate, a certain portion of it, is already on the border-line between the two. Northern Rhodesia seems decidedly to cross that border-line. The present association of the two appears to be in the nature of a political accident or makeshift and not to be based on essentials. If that is so, it would not appear to be inevitable, it may even be thought unnatural and undesirable that, when Southern Rhodesia is drawn, as she ultimately must be, and ought to be, into the South African group of states, she should carry her northern annexe along with her.

On the other hand, there is no doubt the question of access. The region beyond the Zambesi is only accessible to us either through foreign territory on the east or through what will presently be a self-governing dominion, like Canada, Australia, or New Zealand, on the south. There would be something anomalous in the position of a Crown colony

or protectorate, which could not be reached directly from the sea or from some region of similar status to its own. Moreover, the railway, which will ultimately traverse this country from end to end, is a continuation of the Great Trunk Line of South Africa. There are thus, no doubt, considerations of great weight on either side, and we have, perhaps, cause to be grateful that, for the time being, Rhodesia is still in the possession of the Chartered Company, and that there is no need to settle the difficult question of its future distribution and administration in a hurry. The system of extending the bounds of Empire by the agency of Chartered Companies is open to many objections. There has been much in the methods of this particular company, especially during its earliest years, which it is impossible to regard with approval. But the British South Africa Company has at least two great claims on our gratitude. It has kept a large and valuable portion of the Dark Continent under the British flag, and it has built up, in a remarkably short space of time, an administration which, if far from perfect, is at least competent, honest, and humane. Government by means of a company is necessarily a transient form of government. But in the case which we have been considering, it is a valuable stop-gap, valuable in maintaining a tolerable condition of affairs and affording time to work out with deliberation, and with a fuller knowledge than we yet possess of all the conditions of one of the least explored of habitable lands, the best permanent arrangements for its welfare.

And now I see that, starting from certain wide general considerations, I have been led to dwell, at perhaps excessive length, on a single, limited, and remote, though not unimportant or uninteresting, problem. But I venture to hope that, in my method of approaching it, I may to some extent have illustrated my main proposition, which is the inextricable association of your science with the art of statesmanship, and that in any views which I have propounded or suggested, be they right or wrong, I may at least not have offended against the spirit of scientific geography.

## EDINBURGH.—November 15, 1907

### *Unionists and the Empire*

[At the annual general meeting of the East and North of Scotland Liberal Unionist Association.]

I AM greatly reassured by the very kind reception which you have just given me. To tell the truth, I had been feeling a little alarmed at the fate which might await me in Edinburgh. From a faithful perusal of the Radical Press I had been led to believe that Scotland was seething with righteous indignation against that branch of the Legislature of which I am, it is true, only a humble and very recent member, but yet a member, and therefore involved in the general condemnation of the ruthless hereditary tyrants and oppressors of the people, the privileged landowning class, which is alleged to be so out of sympathy with the mass of their fellow-countrymen, although, oddly enough, it supplies many of the most popular candidates, not only of one party, at any General Election. Personally, I feel it rather hard to be painted in such black colours. There is no taint of hereditary privilege about me. I am not—I wish I were—the owner of broad acres, and I am in no way conscious of belonging to a specially favoured class. There are a great many of my fellow members in the House of Lords who are in the same position, and who sit there, not by virtue of any privilege, but by virtue of their services, or, let me say in my own case, supposed services, to the State. And while we sit there—and here I venture, with all humility, to speak for all the members of that body, whether hereditary or created—we feel that we ought to deal with the questions submitted to us to the best of our judgment and conscience, without fear of the consequences to ourselves, and without allowing ourselves to be browbeaten for not being different from what we are. We believe that we perform a useful and necessary function. We believe that a Second Chamber is essential to the good government of this country. We do not contend—certainly I am myself very far from contending—that the

existing Second Chamber is the best imaginable. Let there be a well-considered reform of the House of Lords, or even, if need be, an entirely different Second Chamber. But until you have got this better instrument, do not throw away the instrument which you have—the only defence, not of the privileges of a class, but of the rights of the whole nation, against hasty, ill-considered measures and against the subordination of permanent national interests to the temporary exigencies of a party.

It is said that there is a permanent Conservative majority in the House of Lords. But then every Second Chamber is, and ought to be, conservative in temper. It exists to exercise a restraining influence, to ensure that great changes shall not be made in fundamental institutions except by the deliberate will of the nation, and not as the outcome of a mere passing mood. And if the accusation is, that the House of Lords is too Conservative in a party sense—which is a different thing, I admit, from being Conservative in the highest and best sense—that points not to doing away with the Second Chamber, but to making such a change in its composition as, while leaving it still powerful, still, above all, independent, will render it more representative of the permanent mind of the nation.

But let me be permitted to observe that the instance relied on to prove that the House of Lords is in the pocket of the Conservative party is a very unfortunate instance. What is its offence? It is said that the Lords rejected the Scottish Land Bill. But they did not reject the Scottish Land Bill. They were quite prepared to accept a portion of the Bill, and it is for the Government to answer to the people interested in that portion for their not having received the benefits which the Bill was presumably intended to bestow on them. What the Government did was to hold a pistol at the head of the House of Lords, and to say that they must either accept the whole straggling and ill-constructed measure as it stood, or be held up to public odium for rejecting it. But when the Bill was looked at as a whole, it was found to contain principles—novel prin-

ciples as far as the great part of Scotland was concerned, bad principles, as the experience of Ireland showed—which the House of Lords, and not only the Conservatives in the House of Lords, were not prepared to endorse. Was it Conservative criticism which killed the Bill? It was riddled with arguments by a Liberal Peer and former Liberal Prime Minister—arguments to which the Government speakers were quite unable, and had the good sense not even to attempt, to reply. And that is the instance which is quoted to prove that the House of Lords is a Tory Caucus!

Now, before leaving this question of the House of Lords, let me just say one word about its general attitude. I have not long been a member of that assembly. I do not presume to take much part in its discussions. But I follow them, and I think I follow them with a fairly unprejudiced mind. On many questions I am perhaps not in accord with the views of the majority of the House. But what strikes me about the House of Lords is that it is a singularly independent assembly. It is not at the beck and call of any man. It is a body which does not care at all about party claptrap, but which does care a great deal about a good argument, from whatever quarter it may proceed. Moreover, I am confident that the great body of its members are quite alive to the fact that they cannot afford to cast their votes merely according to their individual opinions and personal prejudices—that they are trustees for the nation, and that, while it is their duty to prevent the nation being hustled into revolution, as but for them it would have been hustled into Home Rule in 1893, they have no right to resist changes upon which the nation has clearly, and after full deliberation, set its mind. And when the Prime Minister says that it is intolerable arrogance on the part of the House of Lords to pretend to know better what the nation wishes than the House of Commons, I can only reply that the proof of the pudding is in the eating. In 1893 the House of Commons said that the nation wished Home Rule. The House of Lords had the intolerable arrogance to take a different view. Well, within less than

two years, the question was submitted to the nation ; and who proved to be right ?

I regret to have had to dwell at such length upon this particular topic. But it seems to me that we have no choice in the matter. If the Government succeed in their attempt to divert the attention of the nation from matters of the greatest interest at home and abroad in order to involve us all in a constitutional struggle on a false issue, we must be prepared to meet them. But I do not wish to waste the rare opportunity afforded to me to-night of addressing this great and representative Scottish audience, by talking exclusively about this regrettable manœuvre. There is something I am anxious to say to you about the future of the Unionist party. I do not claim to lay down a policy for that or for any party. I am not, by temperament or antecedents, a good party man. But I want to be allowed, as a private citizen, to point out what are the great services which I think the Unionist party can render to the nation at the present very critical juncture in its history. The Unionist party has a splendid record in the past. For twenty years it has saved the United Kingdom from disruption. It has preserved South Africa for the Empire ; and, greatly as I feel and know that the results of the efforts and sacrifices of the nation have been marred and impaired by the disastrous policy of the last two years, South Africa is still one country under the British flag. And all the time, in spite of foreign war and domestic sedition, the Unionist party has pursued a steady policy of practical social reform, and the administrative and legislative record of the last twenty years will compare favourably with that of any period of our history.

But no party can afford to rely upon its past achievements. How is the Unionist party going to confront the great problems of the present day ? The greatest of these problems, as I shall never cease to preach to my countrymen, is the maintenance of the great heritage which we owe to the courage, the enterprise, and the self-sacrifice of our forefathers, who built up one of the greatest Empires

in history by, on the whole, the most honourable means. The epoch of expansion is pretty nearly past, but there remains before us a great work of development and consolidation. And that is a work which should appeal especially to Scotsmen. The Scottish people have borne a great part, great out of proportion to their numbers, in building up our common British heritage. They are taking a foremost part in it to-day. All over the world, as settlers in Canada, in Australia, or in South Africa, as administrators in India and elsewhere, they are among the sturdiest pillars on which the great Imperial fabric rests. I am not talking in the air. I am speaking from my personal experience, and only saying in public here to-night what I have said in private a hundred times, that as an agent of my country in distant lands I have had endless occasion to appreciate the support given to the British cause by the ability, the courage, the shrewd sense and the broad Imperial instinct of many Scotsmen. And therefore I look with confidence to a Scottish audience to support my appeal for continuous national effort in making the most of the British Empire. I say this is not a matter with regard to which we can afford to rest on our laurels. We must either go forward or we shall go back. And especially ought we to go forward in developing co-operation, on a basis of equality and partnership, with the great self-governing communities of our race in the distant portions of the world, else they will drift away from us. Do not let us think for a moment that we can afford such another fiasco as the late Colonial Conference. Do not let us imagine for a moment that we can go to sleep over the questions then raised, and not one of them settled, for four years, only to find ourselves unprepared when the next Conference meets. A cordial social welcome, many toasts, many dinners, are all very well in their way, but they are not enough. What is wanted is a real understanding of what our fellow-countrymen across the seas are driving at, and a real attempt to meet them in their efforts to keep us a united family. All that our present

rulers seem able to do is to misunderstand, and therefore unconsciously to misrepresent—I do not question their good intentions, but I think they are struck with mental blindness in this matter—to misrepresent the attitude of the colonists, and greatly to exaggerate the difficulties of meeting them half-way. The speeches of Ministers on a question like that of Colonial Preference leave upon me the most deplorable impression. One would have thought that, if they could not get over the objections which they feel to meeting the advances of our kinsmen, they would at least show some sort of regret at their failure. But not a bit of it. Their one idea all along has been to magnify the difficulties in the way in order to make party capital out of the business. They saw their way to a good cry about 'taxing the food of the people,' the big and the little loaf, and so forth, and they went racing after it, regardless of everything but its electioneering value. From first to last there has been the same desire to make the worst of things, sometimes by very disingenuous means. First of all it was said that there was 'no colonial offer.' But when the representatives of the Colonies came here, and all in the plainest terms offered us preference for preference, this device evidently had to be abandoned. So then it was asserted that, in order to give preference to the Colonies, we must tax raw materials. But this move again was promptly checkmated by the clear and repeated declaration of the colonial representatives that they did not expect us to tax raw materials. And so nothing was left to Ministers, determined as they were to wriggle out of any agreement with the Colonies at all costs, except to fall back on the old, weary parrot-cry—'Will you tax corn?' 'Will you tax butter?' and so on through the whole list of articles of common consumption, the taxation of any one of which was thought to be valuable as an electioneering bogey.

For my own part, I am not the least bit frightened by any of these questions. If I am asked whether I would tax this or tax that, it may be proof of great depravity on

my part, but I say without hesitation that, for a sufficient object, I should not have the least objection to putting two shillings a quarter on wheat or twopence a pound on butter. But I must add that the whole argument nauseates me. What sort of opinion must these gentlemen have of their fellow-countrymen, if they think that the question of a farthing on the quartern loaf or half a farthing on the pat of butter is going to outweigh in their minds every national consideration? And these are the men who accused Mr. Chamberlain of wishing to unite the Empire by sordid bonds! It is indeed extraordinary and to my mind almost heartrending to see how this question of Tariff Reform continues to be discussed on the lowest grounds, and how its higher and wider aspects seem to be so constantly neglected. Yet we have no excuse for ignoring them. The colonial advocates of preference, and especially Mr. Deakin, with whose point of view I thoroughly agree, have repeatedly explained the great political, national, and I might almost say moral aspects of that policy. There is a great deal more in it than a readjustment of duties—twopence off this and a penny on that. I do not say that such details are not important. When the time comes I am prepared to show—and I am an old hand at these things—that the objections which loom so large in many eyes can really be very easily circumvented. But I would not attempt to bother my fellow-countrymen with complicated changes in their fiscal arrangements, or even with the discussion of them, if it were not for the bigness of the principle that is involved.

I wish to look at it from two points of view. The principle which lies at the root of Tariff Reform, in its Imperial aspect, is the national principle. The people of these great dominions beyond the seas are no strangers to us. They are our own kith and kin. We do not wish to deal with them, even in merely material matters, on the same basis as with strangers. That is the great difference between us Tariff Reformers and the Cobdenites. The Cobdenite only looks at the commercial side. He is a cosmopolitan.

He does not care from whom he buys, or to whom he sells. He does not care about the ulterior effects of his trading, whether it promotes British industry or ruins it; whether it assists the growth of the kindred states, or only enriches foreign countries. To us Tariff Reformers these matters are of moment, and of the most tremendous moment. We do not undervalue our great foreign trade, and I for one am convinced that there is nothing in the principles of Tariff Reform which will injure that trade. Quite the reverse. But we do hold that our first concern is with the industry and productive capacities of our own country, and our next with those of the great kindred countries across the seas. We hold that a wise fiscal policy would help to direct commerce into channels which would not only assist the British worker, but also assist colonial development, and make for the greater and more rapid growth of those countries, which not only contain our best customers, but our fellow-citizens.

That, I say, is one aspect of the matter. But then there is the other side—the question of social reform in this country. Now here again we differ from the Cobdenite. The Cobdenite is an individualist. He believes that private enterprise, working under a system of unfettered competition, with cheapness as its supreme object, is the surest road to universal well-being. The Tariff Reformer also believes in private enterprise, but he does not believe that the mere blind struggle for individual gain is going to produce the most beneficent results. He does not believe in cheapness if it is the result of sweating or of underpaid labour. He keeps before him as the main object of all domestic policy the gradual, steady elevation of the standard of life throughout the community; and he believes that the action of the State deliberately directed to the encouragement of British industry, not merely by tariffs, is part and parcel of any sound national policy and of true Imperialism. And please observe that in a number of cases the Radical party itself has abandoned Cobdenism. Pure individualism went to the wall in the

Factory Acts, and it is going to the wall every day in our domestic legislation. It is solely with regard to this matter of imports that the Radical party still cling to the Cobdenite doctrine, and the consequence is that their policy has become a mass of inconsistencies. It is devoid of any logical foundation whatever.

I know that there are many people, sound Unionists at heart, who still have a difficulty about accepting the doctrines of the Tariff Reformers. My belief is that, if they could only look at the matter from the broad national and Imperial point of view, they would come to alter their convictions. I am not advocating Tariff Reform as in itself the greatest of human objects. But it seems to me the key of the position. It seems to me that, without it, we can neither take the first steps towards drawing closer the bonds between the Mother Country and the great self-governing states of the Empire; nor maintain the prosperity of the British worker in face of unfair foreign competition; nor obtain that large and elastic revenue which is absolutely essential if we are going to pursue a policy of social reform and mean real business. I cannot but hope that many of those who still shy at Tariff Reform, when they come to look at it from this point of view—to see it as I see it, not as an isolated thing, but as an essential and necessary part of a comprehensive national policy—will rally to our cause. I have travelled along that road myself. I have been a Cobdenite myself—I am not ashamed of it. But I have come to see that the doctrine of free imports—the religion of free imports, I ought to say—as it is practised in this country to-day, is inconsistent with social reform, inconsistent with fair play to British industry, and inconsistent with the development and consolidation of the Empire. And therefore I rejoice that, in the really great speech which he delivered last night, the leader of the Unionist party has once more unhesitatingly affirmed his adhesion to the principles which I have been trying, in my feebler way, to advocate here this evening. My own conviction is that, when these principles are understood

in all their bearings, they will command the approval of the mass of the people. And even in Scotland, where I dare say it is a very uphill fight, I look forward with confidence to their ultimate victory. Do not let us be discouraged if the fight is long and the progress slow. The great permanent influences are on our side. On the one hand there is the growth of the Empire, with all the opportunities which it affords ; on the other, there is the increasing determination of foreign nations to keep their business to themselves. These potent facts, which have already converted so many leading minds, will in due time make themselves felt in ever-widening circles. And they will not fail to produce their effect upon the shrewd practical sense of the Scottish people, especially when combined with an appeal to the patriotic instincts of a race which has done so much to make the Empire what it is, and which has such a supreme interest in its maintenance and consolidation.

## RUGBY.—November 19, 1907

### *Unionists and Social Reform*

[At a meeting of a local Unionist Association.]

There has been such a deluge of talk during the last three weeks that I doubt whether it is possible for me, or any man, to make a further contribution to the discussion which will have any freshness or value. But inasmuch as you probably do not all read all the speeches, you may perhaps be willing to hear from me a condensed summary of what it all comes to—of course, from my point of view, which no doubt is not quite the same as that of the Prime Minister or Mr. Asquith. Now, from my point of view, there has been a considerable clearing of the air, and we ought all to be in a position to take a more practical and less exaggerated view of the situation. Speaking as a Tariff Reformer, I think that those people with whom Tariff Reformers agree on almost all other political questions, but who are strongly and conscientiously opposed to anything like what they call tampering with our fiscal

system, must by now understand a little better than they did before what Tariff Reformers really aim at, and must begin to see that there is nothing so very monstrous or revolutionary about our proposals. I hope they may also begin to see why it is that Tariff Reformers are so persistent and so insistent upon their own particular view. There is something very attractive in the argument which says that, since Tariff Reform is a stumbling-block to many good Unionists, it should be dropped, and our ranks closed in defence of an effective Second Chamber, and in defence of all our institutions against revolutionary attacks directed upon the existing order of society. In so far as this is an argument for tolerance and against excommunicating people because they do not agree with me about Tariff Reform, I am entirely in accord with it. I am only a convert to Tariff Reform myself, although I am not a very recent convert, for at the beginning of 1903, at Bloemfontein, I was instrumental in inducing all the South African colonies to give a substantial preference to goods of British origin. I was instrumental in doing that some months before the great Tariff Reform campaign was inaugurated in this country by its leading champion, Mr. Chamberlain. But while I am all for personal tolerance, I am opposed to any compromise on the question of principle. I am not opposed to it from any perverseness or any obstinacy. I am opposed to it, because I see clearly that dropping Tariff Reform will knock the bottom out of a policy which I believe is not only right in itself, but is the only effective defence of the Union and of many other things which are very dear to us—I mean a policy of constructive Imperialism, and of steady, consistent, unhasting, and unresting Social Reform.

I have never advocated Tariff Reform as a nostrum or as a panacea. I have never pretended that it is by itself alone sufficient to cure all the evils inherent in our social system, or alone sufficient as a bond of Empire. What I contend is that without it, without recovering our fiscal freedom, without recovering the power to deal with Customs

duties in accordance with the conditions of the present time and not the conditions of fifty years ago, we cannot carry out any of those measures which it is most necessary that we should carry out. Without it we are unable to defend ourselves against illegitimate foreign competition; we are unable to enter into those trade arrangements with the great self-governing states of the British Crown across the seas, which are calculated to bestow the most far-reaching benefits upon them and upon us; and we are unable to obtain the revenue which is required for a policy of progressive Social Reform. I hope that people otherwise in agreement with us, who have hitherto not seen their way to get over their objections to Tariff Reform, will, nevertheless, find themselves able to accept that principle, when they regard it, not as an isolated thing, but as an essential part of a great national and Imperial policy.

Of course they will have to see it as it is, and not as it is represented by its opponents. The opponents of Tariff Reform have a very easy method of arguing with its supporters. They say that any departure whatsoever from our present fiscal system necessarily involves taxing raw materials, and must necessarily result in high and prohibitive duties which will upset our foreign trade, and will be ruinous and disorganising to the whole business of the country. But Tariff Reformers are not going to frame their duties in order to suit the argumentative convenience of Mr. Asquith. They are going to be guided by wholly different considerations from that. It is curious that everybody opposed to Tariff Reform says that Tariff Reformers intend to tax raw material, while Tariff Reformers themselves have steadily said they do not. I ask you in that respect to take the description of a policy of Tariff Reform from those who advocate it, and not from those who oppose it. And as for the argument about high prohibitive duties, I wish people would read the reports or summaries of the reports of the Tariff Commission. They contain not only the most valuable collection

that exists anywhere of the present facts about almost every branch of British industry, but they are also an authoritative source from which to draw inferences as to the intentions of Tariff Reformers. Now the Tariff Reform Commission have not attempted to frame a complete tariff, a scale of duties for all articles imported into this country, and wisely ; because, if they had tried to do that, people would have said that they were arrogating to themselves the duties of Parliament. What they have done is to show by a few instances that a policy of Tariff Reform is not a thing in the air, not a mere thing of phrases and catchwords, but is a practical, business-like working policy. They have drawn up what may be called experimental scales of duties, which are merely suggestions for consideration, with respect to a number of articles under the principal heads of British imports, such as, for instance, agricultural imports and imports of iron and steel. These experimental duties vary on the average from something like 5 per cent. to 10 per cent. on the value of the articles. In no one case in my recollection do they exceed 10 per cent.

But then the opponents of Tariff Reform say : 'Yes. That is all very well. But though you may begin with moderate duties, you are bound to proceed to higher ones. It is in the nature of things that you should go on increasing and increasing, and in the end we shall all be ruined.' I must say that seems to me great nonsense. It reminds me of nothing so much as the fearful warnings which I have read in the least judicious sort of temperance literature, and sometimes heard from temperance orators of the more extreme type—the sort of warning, I mean, that, if you once begin touching anything stronger than water, you are bound to go on till you end by beating your wife and die in a workhouse. But you and I know perfectly well that it is possible to have an occasional glass of beer or glass of wine, or even, low be it spoken, a little whisky, without beating or wanting to beat anybody, and without coming to such a terrible end. The argument against the use of

anything from its abuse has always struck me as one of the feeblest of arguments. And just see how particularly absurd it is in the present case. The effect of duties on foreign imports, even such moderate and carefully devised duties as those to which I have referred, would, we are told, be ruinous to British trade. It would place intolerable burdens upon the people. Yet for all that the people would, it appears, insist on increasing these burdens. Surely it is as clear as a pikestaff that, if the duties which Tariff Reformers advocate were to produce the evils which Free Importers allege that they would produce, these duties, so far from being inevitably maintained and increased, would not survive one General Election after their imposition.

It is not only with regard to Tariff Reform that I think the air is clearer. The Unionist party has to my mind escaped another danger which was quite as great as that of allowing the tariff question to be pushed on one side, and that was the danger of being frightened by the scare, which the noisy spreading of certain subversive doctrines has lately caused, into a purely negative and defensive attitude; of ceasing to be, as it has been, a popular and progressive party, and becoming merely the embodiment of upper and middle class prejudices and alarms. I do not say that there are not many projects in the air which are calculated to excite alarm, but they can only be successfully resisted on frankly democratic and popular lines. My own feeling is—I may be quite wrong, but I state my opinion for what it is worth—that there is far less danger of the democracy going wrong about domestic questions than there is of their going wrong about foreign and Imperial questions, and for this simple reason, that with regard to domestic questions they have their own sense and experience to guide them.

If a mistake is made in domestic policy, its consequences are rapidly felt, and no amount of fine talking will induce people to persist in courses which are affecting them injuriously in their daily lives. You have thus a constant

and effective check upon those who are disposed to try dangerous experiments, or to go too fast even on lines which may be in themselves laudable, as the experience of recent municipal elections, among other things, clearly shows. But with regard to Imperial questions, to our great and vital interests in distant parts of the earth, neither is there necessarily the same amount of personal knowledge on the part of the electorate, nor do the consequences of a mistaken policy recoil so directly and so unmistakably upon them. These subjects, therefore, are the happy hunting-ground of the visionary and the phrase-maker. I have seen the people of this country talked into a policy with regard to South Africa at once so injurious to their own interests, and so base towards those who had thrown in their lot with us and trusted us, that, if the British nation had only known what that policy really meant, they would have spat it out of their mouths. And I tremble every day lest, on the vital question of Defence, the pressure of well-meaning but ignorant idealists, or the meaner influence of vote-catching demagogues, should lead this Government or, indeed, any Government, to curtail the provision, already none too ample, for the safety of the Empire, in order to pose as the friends of peace or as special adepts in economy. I know these savings of a million or two a year over say five or ten years, which cost you fifty or one hundred millions, wasted through unreadiness when the crisis comes, to say nothing of the waste of gallant lives even more precious. This is the kind of question about which the democracy is liable to be misled, being without the corrective of direct personal contact with the facts to keep them straight. And it is unpopular and uphill work to go on reminding people of the vastness of the duty and the responsibility which the control of so great a portion of the earth's surface, with a dependent population of three or four hundred millions, necessarily involves ; to go on reminding them, too, how their own prosperity and even existence in these islands are linked by a hundred subtle but not always obvious

or superficially apparent threads with the maintenance of those great external possessions.

I say these are difficulties which any party or any man who is prepared to do his duty by the electorate of this country, not merely to ingratiate himself with them for the moment, but to win their confidence by deserving it, by telling them the truth, by serving their permanent interests and not their passing moods, is bound to face. For my own part, I have always been perfectly frank on these questions. I have maintained on many platforms, I am prepared to maintain here to-night and shall always maintain, although this is a subject on which it may be long before my views are included in any party programme—I say I shall always maintain, that real security is not possible without citizen service, and that the training of every able-bodied man to be capable of taking part, if need be, in the defence of his country, is not only good for the country but good for the man—and would materially assist in the solution of many other problems, social and economic. But being, as I am, thus uncompromising, and quite prepared to find myself unpopular, on these vital questions of national security, and of our Imperial duties and responsibilities, I can perhaps afford to say, without being suspected of fawning or of wishing to play the demagogue myself, that in the matter of domestic reform I am not easy to frighten, and that I have a very great trust in the essential fair-mindedness and good sense of the great body of my fellow-countrymen with regard to questions which come within their own direct cognisance. And therefore it was most reassuring to me at any rate—and I hope it was to you—to observe, that that large section of the Unionist party which met at Birmingham last week, not so much by any resolutions or formal programme—for there was nothing very novel in these—as by the whole tone and temper of its proceedings, affirmed in the most emphatic manner the essentially progressive and democratic character of Unionism. The greatest danger I hold to the Unionist party and to the nation is, that the ideals

of national strength and Imperial consolidation on the one hand, and of democratic progress and domestic reform on the other, should be dissevered, and that people should come to regard as antagonistic objects which are essentially related and complementary to one another. The upholders of the Union, the upholders of the Empire, the upholders of the fundamental institutions of the State, must not only be, but must be seen and known to be, the strenuous and constant assailants of those two great related curses of our social system—irregular employment and unhealthy conditions of life—and of all the various causes which lead to them.

I cannot stay here to enumerate those causes, but I will mention a few of them. There is the defective training of children, defective physical training to begin with, and then the failure to equip them with any particular and definite form of skill. There is the irregular way in which new centres of population are allowed to spring up, so that we go on creating fresh slums as fast as we pull down the old rookeries. There is the depopulation of the countryside, and the influx of foreign paupers into our already overcrowded towns. There is the undermining of old-established and valuable British industries by unfair foreign competition. That is not an exhaustive list, but it is sufficient to illustrate my meaning. Well, wherever these and similar evils are eating away the health and independence of our working people, there the foundations of the Empire are being undermined, for it is the race that makes the Empire. Loud is the call to every true Unionist, to every true Imperialist, to come to the rescue.

And now, at the risk of wearying you, there is one other subject to which I would like specially to refer, lest I should be accused of deliberately giving it the go-by, and that is the question of old age pensions. It is not a reform altogether of the same nature as those on which I have been dwelling, nor is it perhaps the kind of reform about which I feel the greatest enthusiasm, because I would rather attack the causes, which lead to that irregularity of

employment and that under-payment which prevents people from providing for their own old age themselves, than merely remedy the evils arising from it. But I accept the fact that under present conditions, which it may be that a progressive policy in time will alter, a sufficient case for State aid in the matter of old age pensions has been made out, and I believe that no party is going to oppose the introduction of old age pensions. But, on the other hand, I foresee great difficulties and great disputes over the question of the manner in which the money is to be provided. I know how our Radical friends will wish to provide the money. They will want to get it, in the first instance, by starving the Army and the Navy. To that way of providing it I hope the Unionist party, however unpopular such a course may be, and however liable to misrepresentation it may be, will oppose an iron resistance, because this is an utterly rotten and bad way of financing old age pensions, or anything else. But that method alone, however far it is carried, will not provide money enough, and there will be an attempt to raise the rest by taxes levied exclusively on the rich. I am against that also, because it is thoroughly wrong in principle. I am not against making the rich pay, to the full extent of their capacity, for great national purposes, even for national purposes in which they have no direct interest. But I am not prepared to see them made to pay exclusively. Let all pay according to their means. It is a thoroughly vicious idea that money should be taken out of the pocket of one man, however rich, in order to be put into the pocket of another, however poor. That is a bad, anti-national principle, and I hope the Unionist party will take a firm stand against it. And this is an additional reason why we should raise whatever money may be necessary by duties upon foreign imports, because in that way all will contribute. No doubt the rich will contribute the bulk of the money through the duties on imported luxuries, but there will be some contribution, as there ought to be some contribution, from every class of the people.

And now, in conclusion, one word about purely practical considerations. We Unionists, if you will allow me to call myself a Unionist—at any rate I have explained quite frankly what I mean by the term—are not a class party, but a national party. That being so, it is surely of the utmost importance that men of all classes should participate in every branch and every grade of the work of the Unionist party. Why should we not have Unionist Labour members as well as Radical Labour members? I think that the working classes of this country are misrepresented in the eyes of the public of this country and of the world, as long as they appear to have no leaders in Parliament except the men who concoct and pass those machine-made resolutions, with which we are so familiar in the reports of Trade Union Congresses. I am not speaking now about their resolutions on trade questions, which they thoroughly understand, but about resolutions on such subjects as foreign politics, the Army and Navy, and Colonial and Imperial questions, resolutions which are always upon the same monotonous lines. I do not believe that the working classes are the unpatriotic, anti-national, down-with-the-army, up-with-the-foreigner, take-it-lying-down class of Little Englanders, that they are constantly represented to be. I do not believe it for a moment. I have heard Imperial questions discussed by working men in excellent speeches, not only eloquent speeches, but speeches showing a broad grasp and a truly Imperial spirit, and I should like speeches of that kind to be heard in the House of Commons, as an antidote to the sort of preaching which we get from the present Labour members. And what I say about the higher posts in the Unionist army applies equally to all other ranks. No Unionist member or Unionist candidate is really well served unless he has a number of men of the working class on what I may call his political staff. And I say this not merely for electioneering reasons. This is just one of the cases in which considerations of party interest coincide—I wish they always or often did—with considerations of a higher character.

There is nothing more calculated to remove class prejudice and antagonism than the co-operation of men of different classes on the same body for the same public end. And there is this about the aims of Unionism, that they are best calculated to teach the value of such co-operation; to bring home to men of all classes their essential interdependence on one another, as well as to bring home to each individual the pettiness and meanness of personal vanity and ambition in the presence of anything so great, so stately, as the common heritage and traditions of the British race.

## OXFORD.—December 5, 1907

### *Sweated Industries*

[In the course of opening the Exhibition held under the auspices of the Industrial Law Committee.]

This exhibition is one of a series which are being held in different parts of the country, with the object of directing attention, or rather of keeping it directed, to the conditions under which a number of articles, many of them articles of primary necessity, are at present being produced, and with the object also of improving the lot of the people engaged in the production of those articles. Now this matter is one of great national importance, because the sweated workers are numbered by hundreds of thousands, and because their poverty and the resulting evils affect many beside themselves, and exercise a depressing influence on large classes of the community. What do we mean by sweating? I will give you a definition laid down by a Parliamentary Committee, which made a most exhaustive inquiry into the subject: 'Unduly low rates of wages, excessive hours of work, and insanitary condition of the work-places.' You may say that this is a state of things against which our instincts of humanity and charity revolt. And this is perfectly true, but I do not propose to approach the question from that point of

view to-day. I want to approach it from the economic and political standpoint. But when I say political I do not mean it in any party sense. This is not a party question; may it never become one! The organisers of this exhibition have done what lay in their power to prevent the blighting and corrosive influence of party from being extended to it. The fact that the position which I occupy at this moment will be occupied to-morrow by the wife of a distinguished member of the present Government (Mrs. Herbert Gladstone), and on Saturday by a leading member of the Labour party (Mr. G. N. Barnes, M.P.), shows that this is a cause in which people of all parties can co-operate. The more we deal with sweating on these lines, the more we deal with it on its merits or demerits without ulterior motive, the more likely we shall be to make a beginning in the removal of those evils against which our crusade is directed.

My view is, that the sweating system impoverishes and weakens the whole community, because it saps the stamina and diminishes the productive power of thousands of workers, and these in their turn drag others down with them. 'Unduly low rates of wages, excessive hours of labour, insanitary condition of work-places'—what does all that mean? It means an industry essentially rotten and unsound. To say that the labourer is worthy of his hire is not only the expression of a natural instinct of justice, but it embodies an economic truth. One does not need to be a Socialist, not, at least, a Socialist in the sense in which the word is ordinarily used, as designating a man who desires that all instruments of production should become common property—one does not need to be a Socialist in that sense in order to realise that an industry, which does not provide those engaged in it with sufficient to keep them in health, is essentially unsound. Used-up capital must be replaced, and of all forms of capital the most fundamental and indispensable is the human energy necessarily consumed in the work of production. A sweated industry does not provide for the replacing of that kind

of capital. It squanders its human material. It consumes more energy in the work it exacts than the remuneration it gives is capable of replacing. The workers in sweated industries are not able to live on their wages. As it is, they live miserably, grow old too soon, and bring up sickly children. But they would not live at all, were it not for the fact that their inadequate wages are supplemented, directly, in many cases, by out-relief, and indirectly by numerous forms of charity. In one way or another the community has to make good the inefficiency that sweating produces. In one way or another the community ultimately pays, and it is my firm belief that it pays far more in the long run under the present system, than if all workers were self-supporting. If a true account could be kept, it would be found that anything which the community gains by the cheapness of articles produced under the sweating system is more than outweighed by the indirect loss involved in the inevitable subsidising of a sweated industry. That would be found to be the result, even if no account were taken of the greatest loss of all, the loss arising from the inefficiency of the sweated workers and of their children, for sweating is calculated to perpetuate inefficiency and degeneration.

The question is: Can anything be done? Of the three related evils—unduly low rates of wages, excessive hours of labour, and insanitary condition of work-places—it is evident that the first applies equally to sweated workers in factories and at home, but the two others are to some extent guarded against, in factories, by existing legislation. This is the reason why some people would like to see all work done for wages transferred to factories. Broadly speaking, I sympathise with that view. But if it were universally carried out at the present moment, it would inflict an enormous amount of suffering and injustice on those who add to their incomes by home work. Hence the problem is twofold. First, can we extend to workers in their own homes that degree of protection in respect of hours and sanitary conditions which the law

already gives to workers in factories? And secondly, can we do anything to obtain for sweated workers, whether in homes or factories, rates of remuneration less palpably inadequate? Now it certainly seems impossible to limit the hours of workers, especially adult workers, in their own homes. More can be done to ensure sanitary conditions of work. Much has been done already, so far as the structural condition of dwellings is concerned. But I am afraid that the measures necessary to introduce what may be called the factory standard of sanitariness into every room, where work is being done for wages, would involve an amount of inspection and interference with the domestic lives of hundreds of thousands of people, which might create such unpopularity as to defeat its own object. I do not say that nothing more should be attempted in that direction, quite the reverse; but I say that nothing which can be attempted in that direction really goes to the root of the evil, which is the insufficiency of the wage. How can you possibly make it healthy for a woman, living in a single room, perhaps with children, but even without, to work twelve or fourteen hours a day for seven or eight shillings a week, and at the same time to do her own cooking, washing, and so on? How much food is she likely to have? How much time will be hers to keep the place clean and tidy? An increase of wages would not make sanitary regulations unnecessary, but it would make their observance more possible.

An increase of wages then is the primary condition of any real improvement in the lives of the sweated workers. So the point is this. Can we do anything by law to screw up the remuneration of the worst-paid workers to the minimum necessary for tolerable human existence? I know that many people think it impossible, but my answer is, that the fixing of a limit below which wages shall not fall is already not the exception but the rule in this country. That may seem a rather startling statement, but I believe I can prove it. Take the case of the State, the greatest of all employers. The State does not allow the rates of

pay, even of its humblest employés, to be decided by the scramble for employment. The State cannot afford, nor can any great municipality afford, to pay wages on which it is obviously impossible to live. There would be an immediate outcry. Here then you have a case of vast extent, in which a downward limit of wages is fixed by public opinion. Take, again, any of the great staple industries of the country, the cotton industry, the iron and steel industry, and many others. In the case of these industries, rates of remuneration are fixed in innumerable instances by agreement between the whole body of employers in a particular trade and district on the one hand, and the whole body of employés on the other. The result is to exclude unregulated competition and to secure the same wages for the same work. No doubt there is an element—and this is a point of great importance—which enters into the determination of wages in these organised trades, but which does not enter in the same degree into the determination of the salaries paid by the State. That element is the consideration of what the employers can afford to pay. This question is constantly being threshed out between them and the workpeople, with resulting agreements. The number of such agreements is very large, and the provisions contained in them often regulate the rate of remuneration for various classes of workers with the greatest minuteness. But the great object, and the principal effect of all these agreements, is this: it is to ensure uniformity of remuneration, the same wage for the same work, and to protect the most necessitous and most helpless workers from being forced to take less than the employers can afford to pay. Broadly speaking, the rate of pay, in these highly organised industries, is determined by the value of the work and not by the need of the worker. That makes an enormous difference. But in sweated industries this is not the case. Sweated industries are the unorganised industries, those in which there is no possibility of organisation among the workers. Here the individual worker, without resources and without backing,

is left, in the struggle of unregulated competition, to take whatever he can get, regardless of what others may be getting for the same work and of the value of the work itself. Hence the extraordinary inequality of payment for the same kind of work and the generally low average of payment which are the distinguishing features of all sweated industries.

Now, if you have followed this rather dry argument, I shall probably have your concurrence when I say that the proposal that the State should intervene to secure, not an all-round minimum wage, but the same wages for the same work, and nothing less than the standard rate of his particular work for every worker, is not a proposition that the State should do something new, or exceptional, or impracticable. It is a proposal that the State should do for the weakest and most helpless trades what the strongly-organised trades already do for themselves. I cannot see that there is anything unreasonable, much less revolutionary or subversive, in that suggestion.

This proposal has taken practical form in a Bill presented to the House of Commons last session. Whether the measure reached its second reading or not I do not know. It was a Bill for the establishment of Wages Boards in certain industries employing great numbers of workpeople, such as tailoring, shirtmaking, and so on. The industries selected were those in which the employés, though numerous, are hopelessly disorganised and unable to make a bargain for themselves. And the Bill provided that where any six persons, whether masters or employés, applied to the Home Secretary for the establishment of a Wages Board, such a Board should be created in the particular industry and district concerned; that it should consist of representatives of employers and employed in equal proportions, with an impartial chairman; and that it should have the widest possible discretion to fix rates of remuneration. If Wages Boards were established, as the Bill proposed, they would simply do for sweated trades what is already constantly being done in

organised trades, with no doubt one important difference —that the decisions of these Boards would be enforceable by law. Now that no doubt may seem to many of you a drastic proposition. But I would strongly recommend any one interested in the subject to study a recently-published Blue-book, one of the most interesting I have ever read, which contains the evidence given before the House of Commons Committee on Home Work. That Blue-book throws floods of light on the conditions which have led to the proposal of Wages Boards, on the way in which these Boards would be likely to work, and on the results of the operation of such Boards in the colony of Victoria, where they have existed for more than ten years, and now apply to more than forty industries. The perusal of that evidence would, I feel sure, remove some at least of the most obvious objections to this proposed remedy for sweating.

Many people look askance, and justly look askance, at the interference of the State in anything so complicated and technical as a schedule of wages for any particular industry. But the point to bear in mind is this, that the wages, which under this proposal would be enforceable by law, would be wages that had been fixed for a particular industry in a particular district by persons intimately cognisant with all the circumstances, and, more than that, by persons having the deepest common interest to avoid anything which could injure the industry. The rates of remuneration so arrived at what would be based on the consideration of what the employers could afford to pay and yet retain such a reasonable rate of profit as would lead to their remaining in the industry. Such a regulation of wages would be as great a protection to the best employers against the cut-throat competition of unscrupulous rivals, as it would be to the workers against being compelled to sell their labour for less than its value. There is plenty of evidence that the regulation of wages would be welcomed by many employers. And as for the fear sometimes expressed that it would injure the weakest and least efficient

workers, because, with increased wages, it would no longer be profitable to employ them, it must be borne in mind that people of that class are mainly home workers, and as remuneration for home work must be based on the piece, there would be no reason why they should not continue to be employed. No doubt they would not benefit as much as more efficient workers from increased rates, but *pro tanto* they would still benefit, and that is a consideration of great importance. But even if this were not the case, I would still contend that it was unjustifiable to allow thousands of people to remain in a preventable state of misery and degradation all their lives, merely in order to keep a tenth of their number out of the workhouse a few years longer.

I have only one more word to say. I come back to the supreme interest of the community in the efficiency and welfare of all its members, to say nothing of the removal of the stain upon its honour and conscience which continued tolerance of this evil involves. That to my mind is the greatest consideration of all. That is the true reason, as it would be the sufficient justification, for the intervention of the State. And, for my own part, I feel no doubt that, whether by the adoption of such a measure as we have been considering, or by some other enactment, steps will before long be taken for the removal of this national disgrace.

## MANSION HOUSE.—DECEMBER 6, 1907

### *Cape Town Cathedral Building Fund*

[At a meeting held at the Mansion House to make 'an appeal to England' in aid of the building fund of the new cathedral at Cape Town, Lord Milner moved the following resolution: 'That the creation of a new cathedral at Cape Town is a work deserving the support of English churchmen,' and spoke as follows]:—

IT is not without some reluctance that I take part in any fresh appeal for money, even an inconsiderable amount of money, at the present time. Day by day the demands

upon the charitable and the public-spirited increase. As we know very well now in the City of London, the means of responding to these demands do not increase in an equal degree. This is a season of the year, too, at which the claims on every one are extraordinarily heavy ; but every rule has its exception, and the case of Cape Town Cathedral really is a very hard case. Personally, I should feel under a special obligation at any time to do what I could to assist Cape Town. Cape Town was my home during the first half of my sojourn in South Africa, during four eventful years ; and it was a home which I loved, and which must always retain a special place in my affections. I lived among the people of Cape Town during a time of great trial, and the ties which are formed between those who are engaged in a common struggle, and who are in touch with a common affliction, are ties which last for a lifetime. But apart from these personal considerations, Cape Town holds a high, and in some senses almost a unique, place among the cities of the Empire. It is one of the very oldest colonial cities. It has been the principal seat of British Government in South Africa for a hundred years ; it has been the headquarters of European civilisation in that sub-continent for two hundred and fifty years. In relation to the rest of the King's dominions, Cape Town is a strategic point of first-rate importance. Whatever you may think of the value of the rest of South Africa—and I personally feel that it would be difficult to estimate it too highly—there can be no doubt that Cape Town and the Cape Peninsula are a vital link in the great Imperial chain. On the beautiful slopes of Table Mountain, in a climate which is one of the most favoured in the world, and amid scenery the most magnificent, there has been established an outpost of British power and a home of European culture, of which it would be impossible to over-estimate the present value or the great future. Speaking specially to churchmen, may I remind you that Cape Town is the seat of the first, and what is still the chief, bishopric of South Africa, and that it has been the base

from which all the great missionary work of our Church throughout that sub-continent—though fortunately now it has established other centres of improvement—originally proceeded ? The Cape Town Cathedral of to-day, in itself a mean or at any rate under present conditions an inadequate building, is not mean in its history and associations. It has a great tradition. It is linked with some of the noblest names and the highest aspirations in the world's achievements and in the religious life of South Africa. To erect an edifice altogether worthy of Cape Town, or of the work of the Church in South Africa, is in present circumstances unfortunately impossible. The Archbishop of Cape Town, who has made the erection of such an edifice the object of a lifelong endeavour, wisely recognised a year or two ago that the fulfilment of his whole ideal was not practicable. But he and others interested in the improvement of the cathedral saw their way, and with the aid of an architect, who for good taste and for sympathetic study of past models has no superior, they devised a scheme for partial reconstruction. The scheme was of a character to give us at once something that was beautiful so far as it went, and to leave room for further additions, which in the course of time and with money more abundant would make the whole beautiful, while the scheme was well within the means upon which they could reasonably count. But then came this great financial depression. We talk of depression in the City of London, but it is child's play, and nothing comparable with the deep financial gloom in which all South Africa, and perhaps especially Cape Town, are at present involved. That depression will pass, but meanwhile the work has been begun, and owing to this unforeseeable distress, the engagements of some of its supporters cannot be fulfilled ; and the danger, therefore, is that the whole thing will come to a standstill. Now that surely is a thing which English churchmen are not going to allow to happen. The case is so strong, the need is so exceptional and so urgent that, speaking for myself, I feel that I shall have to put my hand into a pocket—never

well filled and now almost depleted—in order to fish out something; and I therefore have the temerity to ask others to do the same, in order that Cape Town may have at least the beginning of a cathedral worthy of so important a place in the Empire, a place hallowed by the devotion, the efforts and achievements of so many members of the communion to which we belong.

## UNITED EMPIRE CLUB.—December 18, 1907

### *Missionaries of Empire*

[Lord Milner presided at the inaugural dinner of the United Empire Club, and made the following speech in reply to the toast of his health proposed by Mr. George Wyndham]:—

I am glad that Mr. Wyndham laid emphasis on the point that, when we toast the United Empire, we are toasting what is less a fact than an aspiration. That, you may perhaps say, is a discouraging observation. It is not meant to be discouraging. It is meant to be encouraging and inspiriting. It is meant to make you realise the greatness of the task and the duty which rests upon members of the United Empire Club. The greatest living British statesman once described himself as a missionary of Empire. It was a proud title to assume. But its assumption was justified not only by his previous achievements, but by his subsequent devotion of all his powers and his whole self to the cause to which his heart was given. I think that the example of such devotion is a more potent force to inspire and to convert than any eloquence, even his own. Therefore, though silent, he points the way, and what we have to do is to follow in the way which he has pointed out, and to become, according to our respective capacities and opportunities, ourselves missionaries of Empire. When I say that, I do not mean that we are always to be talking about the great extent of the Empire, about its wealth, its population, and all the rest of it. There is too much of that kind of thing. The greatness of our heritage appears to me not to be a reason for boast-

ing, but a reason for humility. Our forefathers have made for this country, for this race, the great position which they occupy in the world to-day. The duty of those who come after them is to defend it, not only against external aggression, but against internal causes of weakness and disorganisation.

The time has passed for looking for any greater extension, I do not myself desire any greater extension, of that vast dominion. The problem of the future is its better organisation. The British Empire as it exists to-day presents two aspects. There are our great tropical and sub-tropical dependencies, which are kept within the Empire solely by the strength of the United Kingdom, by its military and naval power, and by the capacity of its people for the government and administration of weaker races. If either that power or that capacity fail us, the dominion is at an end. On the other hand, there is another aspect of the Empire, another side to it, and that is the great self-governing communities of European blood, mostly of British blood. What keeps them within the Empire is only their desire and our desire to remain a united people. There is no question, no possibility of a question here of force or constraint. It is a case of voluntary union of free and equal peoples under a common Crown, of which they are all equally proud and to which they are all equally devoted. The basis is desire for union. The problem is to implement that union by common institutions in addition to the great common institution and sole existing link of the Crown, for it is difficult to see how, in the absence of any permanent means for consulting and acting together in matters of common concern, we are really to remain a united people. That is the work which lies before the Imperialists, not only of this country but of all the self-governing communities of the British Empire, as we understand the term Imperialist to-day. I trust that in the accomplishment of that work, which none of us will live to see completed, but of which I hope the younger among us may see the foundations surely laid, the United

Empire Club will be able to take a distinguished part. I have referred especially to the younger members, and I appeal particularly to them, because it is on them that my hopes are based. The older among us—and I am sorry that I have to include myself in that category—have too much to unlearn.

The political ideas, which prevailed in the time of our youth, were in the main ideas not wholly favourable to the organisation of an Empire such as ours, or to the creation of the only bonds which can hold together its great self-governing states. They were ideas at once too insular and too cosmopolitan. But the younger men who have grown up at a time when these political ideas were losing their evil dominance, have a better chance of realising the facts of the present situation and of finding a way out of its difficulties. As I have said, I rely upon them. I rely on the slow but steady growth of a stronger sense of the immense practical importance of closer union to all the scattered communities which compose the British Empire, in order to bring us nearer to the goal which we desire to reach. I believe that with the spread of education and with the persistence—I hope there will be persistence—of all those who share our views in preaching them in season and out of season to all classes of the community, the democracy not only in this country but in the great communities of kindred race beyond the seas, will begin to realise the enormous peril to all the states which compose the Empire of the severance of the links at present uniting them. I trust that the feeling of that danger, of our weakness as isolated states, of our enormous strength and security if united, will continually grow, and that throughout the Empire there will be a constant accretion of the number of those who regard it as the first and highest of all political duties to seize every opportunity of multiplying the links which bind us together, and of fostering and developing all the forces, material and moral, which make for the maintenance of a common citizenship and for the strength of a united Empire.

## HOUSE OF LORDS.—MAY 13, 1908

### *Land Values (Scotland) Bill*

IF I offer any criticism to this measure, it is not because I am personally alarmed about confiscatory measures. Nor am I out of sympathy with what I consider the objects of this measure, in so far as it is to carry out that separation between the different interests in land, especially building land, upon the importance of which the Minority Report of the Royal Commission has, as I think, justly insisted. But I am alarmed lest what I believe to be a really useful and necessary reform in rating, should be, if I might use a commonplace expression, choked off at first sight by its being overloaded with an attempt to give effect to certain very extreme and visionary doctrines. I am not sure that this insistence upon capital as against yearly value is not connected with some ideas of that class. The noble and learned Lord (the Lord Chancellor [1]) has spoken eloquently with regard to overcrowding in great cities, and I personally feel great sympathy with what he says. I believe there is public advantage, in some cases, in inducing landowners to give their land for building, but there is also great public advantage, in innumerable cases, in keeping land free from buildings. I know that land kept open may rapidly appreciate in value, and I am the last person to say that appreciated value should escape its fair contribution to the national till, but that contribution should only be exacted when the landowner actually realises that appreciated value. We should not exercise on him year by year a pressure he may not be able to resist to put his land on the market, although he may not wish to do so, and it may be in the highest public interest that he should not do so. I have no desire to save rich people from contributing their full share to the National Exchequer, nor do I desire to prevent the valuable reform of rating which will result from the separation of the permanent interest of the landlord in the site from the temporary interest of

[1] Lord Loreburn.

the tenant in the building. This Bill is not one of very great extent or importance, but it is a first attempt, so far as I know, in the direction of this valuable reform of rating, and for that reason I should like to save it. But if the Government are determined, year after year, to tax landlords upon the value that unoccupied land would have if it were occupied, then the case of this Bill is hopeless.

## HOUSE OF LORDS.—May 20, 1908

### *Preferential Trade*

[On a motion by the Duke of Marlborough 'to call attention to recent changes which have been made in the tariffs of the self-governing colonies for promoting their economic development and the extension of their trade relations with the United Kingdom and foreign countries, and the desirability of increasing the productive power of the Mother Country and the Empire as a whole by the arrangement of reciprocal preferences.']

Every year that passes confirms me more strongly in views the very opposite of the views in which I have been brought up, and the very opposite of the views which have been so eloquently put before the House by the noble Lords to whom I have referred.[1] I am sure that this House, which has always tolerated the strong expression of strong convictions, will sympathise with me in the very serious task which now lies before me. It is difficult to select from the arguments which have been addressed to your lordships against the views put forward by the noble Duke, those which most require reply. I cannot possibly attempt to deal with them all. But I will seek to direct your attention for a short time to one or two which seem to me to be the most weighty.

First of all, may I say a word on the subject of India? I think we are all agreed that, in the consideration of this question, the effect of any changes in our commercial policy upon India must be regarded as of the very highest importance. I am glad that emphasis has been laid upon this branch of the subject to-night, because, if I may

[1] Lords Cromer and Wolverhampton.

criticise my own side, I should like to say that in the arguments of the advocates of preference insufficient attention has hitherto been applied to the Indian part of the case. But I for one am unable to follow the argument that we are debarred from adopting a policy which we believe would be of great commercial benefit to the other portions of the Empire, because of its reflex action upon India. We have had quoted to us the dispatch from the Viceroy's Council in India under Lord Curzon, giving not indeed a negative to the proposals of preferential trading within the Empire, but certainly expressing grave misgivings as to the effect which preferential trading might have upon India. I did not come here prepared for this particular point, but my memory must entirely fail me, if I am mistaken in thinking that the gentleman who was at that time the financial adviser to the Government of India—Sir Edward Law—took a different view upon this matter, and, indeed, is an advocate of preferential trading in the interest of India herself. Whatever may be the view which he took at that time there is no doubt that that gentleman, the Financial Adviser to the Government of India—and a man who has been Financial Adviser to the Government of India certainly counts for something in a question of this kind—is at this day a strong advocate of preferential trade in the interests of India, inasmuch as he has just written the preface to a book on this subject, which discusses the whole question with remarkable freshness and ability, and which is from first to last one of the strongest pamphlets published in favour of preferential trade within the Empire. I mean *India and the Empire*, by Mr. Webb.

So far I have failed to understand what is the injury which it is feared the introduction of preferential trade within the Empire is going to do to India. It has been pointed out to us that the export trade of India is of vast importance to her. Obviously, and it is of vast importance to us. So far as her export trade to this country is concerned, that certainly is not going to be injured by an arrangement which will give her an advantage

in our market over her foreign competitors. Are her exports to foreign countries to be injured? Why should they be? Do foreign countries at present buy of India for love of India? On the contrary, they impose heavy duties—in many cases exceedingly heavy duties—with the object of keeping Indian goods out of their markets. They buy from India the things which they want most—the raw materials which are absolutely essential to them for their own industries. And they will continue to buy them—they must continue to buy them—whatever policy India adopts. The present system and position under which foreign countries do all they can to keep out Indian manufactures—and we are powerless to do anything to assist India—is a most extraordinary one. Take the exports of jute. Foreign countries derive great quantities of the raw material of jute from India, and they will continue to buy as much as ever they can get, whatever system of tariff may be adopted in this country, the Colonies, and India, because they want it to compete with us. They encourage the importation of raw jute from India, but they put heavy and prohibitive taxes upon the import of the manufactured article. What is the result? Indian jute is taken to foreign countries to be made up into the manufactured article, and that manufactured article is then imported into England, to compete with our own manufactures, and is competing with them to our detriment.

Is there not something most unnatural in an arrangement and system under which foreign countries that exclude the manufactures of India buy the raw material from India, and then import it into England to compete with our own manufactures of the same raw material, and the profit of converting the raw material of the Empire into finished goods is taken away from the workers of the Empire by the foreigner? My contention is, that there are obvious respects in which India will benefit from the system of preferential trading within the Empire, and that the fear that she will be damaged depends entirely upon the assumption that foreign governments will try to strike at

us through India—to punish us for adopting a principle in our own tariff legislation which they all adopt themselves. I do not believe in the least in this bugbear that foreign nations are all going to turn round and punish us for doing what they all do. No doubt they are very glad of a system under which they tax our imports as much as they please, and we never retaliate. But on what conceivable principle, either of equity or respect for the public opinion of the world, or for their own interest, are they going to adopt this policy of punishing us? And if they do, how are they going to adopt it? They already tax our goods in every case in which they do not want them. It seems to me that we are excessively timorous if we think that as a nation, as an Empire, we are not in a position to take a course which is freely taken by our own Colonies and by almost every foreign country. I deprecate the assumption that foreign countries are so unreasonable, that they are going to depart from the policy they have always hitherto pursued of using their tariffs for their own interests, and that they are going to punish themselves and cut their own throats in order to penalise us for doing what they all do.

Passing from India to the more general question of the effect of mutual advantages in respect of tariffs upon the trade of different parts of the Empire, I must say I deprecate most strongly the assumption which has been made by the noble viscount who has just addressed us, that because the Colonies are protectionist, and likely to remain protectionist, therefore the advantages we should derive from preference in their markets are never likely to be very considerable. That seems to me to be the root fallacy of all those who take a strong line opposed to preferential tariffs. Let me say at once, that in my view of preferential trade I am unaffected by the extent to which our Colonies may adopt protection. I am unaffected by the hope or fear that a preferential system may lead to general adoption of free trade throughout the Empire. I am somewhat doubtful of the advantages of such a general system of free trade, but we need not discuss that now.

Our whole case rests upon this contention, that however much the Colonies protect their own manufactures—and, perhaps, even in consequence of that protection of their own manufactures—they are bound to be great importers and great buyers, and the difficulty which presses on all sides of getting sufficient markets for our own exports makes it a matter of immense importance to us that we should have the lion's share of that enormous amount of importations which the Colonies, however much they protect, are going to require. My contention is, that however much these great and growing countries may protect industries in which they are specially interested, they will still be great buyers from the outside world, and the question is whether or not we are to be the principal sellers. They all wish us to be. They are all anxious to buy from us. I admit that the Colonies are keen about protecting their own industries, and I rather sympathise with them; but let them protect as much as they please, they are going to be great importers. If a free trade or less-protected Canada is good for seventy or ninety million dollars worth of imports, a highly protected Canada would be good for three hundred million dollars. That is what it is coming to. Under a protective system the imports of the Colonies are growing enormously, just as the imports of protected Germany are growing enormously. The idea that the adoption of protection by a country is going to reduce its foreign trade is exploded by the facts all around us. Highly protected countries are continually increasing their foreign trade. Granted that the Colonies are all protectionist, what is the advantage which we now have and which we are in danger of losing? It is the advantage of the possession of a preference which we calculate will give us the lion's share in the purchases of those countries, which are already of such great importance, and which have such immense futures. That the Colonies should continue to buy from us rather than from the foreigner the vast mass of articles which they require, that is the point. The danger which we run is that we

may no longer be going to get the lion's share of these enormous purchases of the Colonies; that if we do nothing on our side to encourage preferential trade throughout the Empire, the immense advantage which we now enjoy, and which will be so much greater as time goes on and the trade of the Colonies develops, will gradually disappear. That is the danger with which we are confronted, the danger of losing the present great advantage, and the much greater future advantage, of being the principal suppliers of the great markets of the Colonies. The Colonies have taken the lead in this matter of introducing the system of preferential trade. They have done so from two motives. In the first place, there is the motive, freely and eloquently admitted by the late President of the Board of Trade, the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he said they had acted in this matter from a spirit of comradeship and also from a spirit of affection. That is perfectly true. Their spirit of comradeship and affection may not go so far as the sacrifice of their own interests. Why should we wish it? It is sufficient for us that, while safeguarding their own interests, they are anxious to give us the advantage in their own markets as against the foreigner, not as against their own producers. They will protect themselves first, but they are anxious that such goods as they require to import shall be bought from other parts of the Empire rather than from foreign countries. I have said they are influenced by considerations of kinship and affection. They are also influenced, no doubt, by the hope that in taking this line they will hold out sufficient inducements to the Mother Country to follow in the same course.

It is perfectly evident, it has been emphasised by colonial statesman after colonial statesman, that the preference which they at present give, which cannot be described as inconsiderable, is less than the preference which they would be prepared to give, if they were to meet with any corresponding return on the part of the Mother Country. Therefore, we must not estimate the value of the preference

merely by the position as it is, but by the position as it might be. But do not let any of us under-estimate the importance of the position as it is. It is preference which in the case of Canada, has converted a ten years' fall in British imports from seven millions to five millions into a ten years' rise from five millions to thirteen millions. Surely that is not a small matter. It is preference which in four years has increased our imports into New Zealand by three millions, by 40 per cent., while at the same time the corresponding imports from foreign countries have hardly increased at all. These New Zealand figures are of the greatest possible moment. Here is this immense increase of three millions in the importation of British goods into a comparatively small country within four or five years as compared with hardly any increase in the importation of foreign goods. What had been the case during previous years? During the previous eight or ten years, although the imports into New Zealand generally were increasing, the foreign imports increased over 100 per cent., while the increase of our imports was infinitesimal. Preference has had the effect of entirely altering the relation between foreign goods and British goods in the growing market of New Zealand. The noble Lord who sits in front of me said he was not aware that New Zealand had made any reduction in the duties on British goods. If so, it strengthens my argument. The more protectionist New Zealand is, the more do the figures of New Zealand illustrate my main point, the necessity of our having the lion's share of the imports of highly protectionist countries. I have dwelt upon the advantage, as it seems to me, which we derive from the preference accorded to us by the Colonies.

What fills me with alarm is the undoubted and indubitable fact, that without reciprocity we cannot long enjoy these advantages. Let there be no doubt about this. You may say, if the Colonies give us this preference from motives of affection, why should they withdraw it because we do not respond? I am perfectly certain they do not

wish to withdraw it, but they may be unable to help themselves. I have pointed out that the Colonies are great importers for the purpose of their own development; they are great buyers, and, like all other buyers, they have to look after markets, in which they can sell, in order to pay for the great quantity of goods which they require to buy. They are in a world in which, rightly or wrongly, if any nation wishes to have a position of advantage in the markets of others, the only way in which it can get it is by a system of mutual concession. The market in which they are most desirous to have a position of advantage is the great British market. But if they cannot get a position of advantage there, they must look for it elsewhere; and in looking for it elsewhere they are confronted by the fact that, in order to obtain a position of advantage in foreign markets, they are obliged to make concessions upon their tariff, which reduce the value of the preference which they have given to the Mother Country. What has just happened between Canada and France has been most clearly explained by the noble Duke. There is one further element about it to which I cannot help calling attention. Canada did not start with the desire to give up as much of the British preference as she was ultimately forced to give up. The offer, with which Canada went to France, was that France should take her intermediate tariff, which would have given France a considerable advantage as compared with other foreign nations importing into Canada, while leaving a considerable preference to Great Britain. But in the course of the negotiations Canada was forced from that position, and she was driven to make a large number of special rates, which reduced the distance between the tariff given to France and the tariff enjoyed by Great Britain on many articles almost to vanishing point. There you have the process actually going on under your eyes —colonies anxious to keep a prerogative position in their markets for this country and yet, in the case of Canada, driven from that position by the necessity of their own export requirements. There can be no doubt whatever

of their desire to have a position of advantage in the British market. If it is to be denied them they must try and get it somewhere, and in the process of fighting for it they will be obliged to throw over first one item and then another which are at present favourable to Great Britain. That process has already begun. Canada has been driven from her original position, and has been obliged not only to give France much more than she wished to give, having regard to her desire to retain the benefit to this country, but also to give it to something like twenty other countries. One or two more treaties like the treaty between France and Canada will have the effect of destroying our preferential advantage in the Canadian market altogether. It will be said, perhaps, on behalf of the Government, 'We admit all this. Perhaps we do not go as far as you do. We do not estimate as highly as you do the value of Colonial Preference. Still, we admit it has a certain value. But what are we to do? How do you expect us to help in this matter?' My Lords, the present Chancellor of the Exchequer has put in language of much greater eloquence than I can command the importance of the issue that is involved in the system of developing the trade of the Empire by mutual concessions. He said: 'In Great Britain we have the greatest produce market in the world. We are the greatest purchasers of produce raised and manufactured outside our boundaries. A very large proportion of this produce can very well be raised in the Colonies, and any reasonable and workable plan that would tend to increase the proportion of that produce that is bought by us from the Colonies and by the Colonies from us, and from each other, must necessarily increase the resources of the Empire as a whole. A considerable part of the surplus population of the United Kingdom which now goes to foreign lands in search of a livelihood might then find it to its profit to pitch its tent somewhere under the flag, and the Empire would gain in riches, material, and men. We agree with our colonial comrades that all this is worth concentrated effort, even if that effort at the outset costs us something,

the federation of free commonwealths is worth making some sacrifice for. One never knows when its strength may be essential to the great cause of human freedom, and that is priceless.' Concerted effort worth making some sacrifice for, even if it costs us something! I will not ask what sacrifice we are making, because my firm conviction is that no sacrifice is required. But effort is required. What effort of any sort or kind has been made to preserve those great objects which have been described in the passage which I have read, and which we see slipping from our grasp? I suppose we shall be told that the only effort worth making, the only effort which could be productive of any great result, would be a tax upon food imported from foreign countries, from which tax food coming from the Colonies would be wholly or partially exempt. Now, I might take the point, that a great deal could be done without imposing any fresh tax at all. I might point out that there was no answer given to the request addressed by the colonial statesmen to our Government, to give colonial products some advantage on the articles which we at present tax. But I prefer to face the matter squarely, and to say that, from my point of view, the imposition of a 2s. a quarter duty on corn, and corresponding low duties on other articles of food imported from foreign countries, would be an extraordinarily low price to pay for a position of permanent advantage for British merchants and British workmen in supplying the needs of the other portions of the Empire, with all the enormous industrial future which is in store for them. If it is contended that such a duty would fall heavily on any particular class of the population, it is perfectly easy to meet that difficulty by the readjustment of our existing taxes. As a nation we should lose nothing whatever by the imposition of that tax. We should have so much more revenue, which we could either use for any purposes for which we required it, or we could make corresponding reductions in other taxes. And as a nation we should gain the immense advantage of that enhanced trade which would ensue.

The question whether we can afford to introduce taxes in this country, which would enable us to give a preference to the Colonies, and so obtain those advantages of which I have spoken, is a purely economic point. But there is another point dwelt on with great force by the noble earl, which I may call the political and moral point. It is said that, if we adopt a system of preferential trade throughout the Empire, it will lead to perpetual disputes and ill-feeling, and that it will tend to separate us rather than to tie us together. I believe it is the universal experience of mankind that the profitable exchange of goods between one country and another is one of the causes most tending to amity between those countries. All history bears it out. But the system we advocate is a system which has for its principal object the increase of mutually profitable interchange of goods between this country and the other dominions of the Crown. Why should the influence which increase of trade has always exercised be reversed in this particular instance? Will not the very fact of our having an increased interest in the trade of the Colonies, and their having an increased interest in ours, of itself tend to closer relationship, rather than to the reverse? But, it may be said, we shall fight about the terms. No, we shall not fight about the terms, if we grasp the true principle of preference which I have tried to explain. There might be serious quarrels arising over a universal free-trade system within the Empire. If the nascent industries of any portion of the Empire were to find themselves crushed by dumping from the more advanced countries, I could quite understand that that would lead to ill-feeling, and to a disposition to rebel against a general system. But as long as every part of the Empire is allowed to exercise the greatest freedom in the formation of its tariff in its own interest, and in the development of its own trade, how could it possibly lead to ill-feeling, that in that trade which was left, in respect to the imports which it still required, it should be dealing rather with other portions of the Empire than with foreign countries? Does that leave room for any

cause of quarrel whatsoever? I fail entirely to understand how it is contended that it would do so. There is no doubt a possibility that pressure may be put from time to time upon Colonial Governments to protect their traders more against English manufactures. It would be regrettable if that were to take place. But even if that pressure was yielded to, it would not necessarily destroy the system; indeed, it would not even impair it, because they can do what Australia has done, and what I think has been very unreasonably criticised. If they want to protect their own goods against English competition, they can raise their duties. It would be very unfortunate; but as long as, whatever duties they impose, they still differentiate between us and the foreigner, we can still retain the advantage on which I have so strongly insisted—the advantage of a preferential position in what must be great markets, whatever the degree of protection. Do not let us forget one other point, which has perhaps not been referred to at all in this discussion, and that is that the interest which we have in this matter is not only the development of our own trade, it is also the development of the trade of the Colonies. If we are cosmopolitans, it does not matter whether we deal more with foreign countries or with our own Colonies. But if the Empire is to be regarded in any sense as one body-politic, then surely, next to the development of our own trade in this country, it is of importance to us to develop the trade of our Colonies: and it should be reckoned a matter of the greatest interest to us to deal with them rather than with foreign nations. I do not, of course, undervalue our foreign trade, nor need it be at all injuriously affected by increase of trade with the Colonies. But what I wish to point out is, that an increase of our trade with the Colonies is of greater value than an equal increase of our trade with foreign countries. Trade benefits both parties, and if it is trade within the Empire, the Empire enjoys a double benefit—the benefit to us and the benefit to those with whom we trade—whereas in trade outside our borders there is only one benefit. I should deeply regret if in anything I have said

I seemed to overlook the importance of this aspect of the matter—the great importance of a system of preferential trade within the Empire from the point of view of developing those great new countries under the British Crown, rather than developing countries whose wealth does not add, as their wealth does, to the strength of the Empire as a whole.

## IMPERIAL SOUTH AFRICAN ASSOCIATION

MAY 21, 1908

### *The Friends of South Africa*

[The Duke of Westminster, the President, entertained the members of the Imperial South African Association on this date, and proposed the toast of 'The Friends of South Africa,' coupled with Lord Milner's name. The following was Lord Milner's speech in reply]:—

I COULD have wished, for reasons which I shall explain directly, that the task of replying to this toast had fallen to some other speaker. But as your Grace and other leading members of the Association were good enough to make a point of my speaking here to-night, what has happened in the past made it impossible for me to refuse. This is the third or fourth successive annual dinner of this Association at which I have been pressed to speak, and hitherto I have not done so. And yet I owe a great deal to this Association. And what is of much greater importance, the country owes it a great deal for the excellent work it has done in more than one crisis of the Empire's fortunes in South Africa. It would ill become me, who have had better opportunity than most men of knowing how great these services have been, not to bear testimony to them. I am to-night therefore only paying a debt, discharging an obligation, and one that I gladly discharge in obeying your behests. But for that, I should greatly have preferred not to say anything about South Africa at the present time. One reason is that I have not much that is cheerful to say, and am not fond of jeremiads. Another is that I know many people consider me biassed on this question. Now, I do not plead guilty to any bias; I am ever on my guard against it. It is only natural that

a man who has devoted the best years of his life to a particular work, devoted them absolutely and without looking to right or left, who has then seen most of that work undone, the policy which it had been his duty and his pride to carry out reversed, and the people who had leant upon him scattered like chaff before the wind, and many of them treated with great injustice, I say that it is only natural that a man in such a position should be inclined to take a somewhat sombre view alike of the present and of the future. I am aware of that danger, and therefore, whatever my personal feelings may be, I am determined not to let them sway my utterances. I would prefer to keep silence altogether. But if I must speak, I will take care not to say anything which by the strictest criterion I can apply seems in any way exaggerated, and especially I will be very careful not to say anything to create difficulties for the present rulers of South Africa.

Why, indeed, should I seek to do so? I have no quarrel with them at all, no complaint to make of their action. They are doing many things of which I disapprove, but they are not doing anything which it was not absolutely certain beforehand, and indeed inevitable, that they would do; nothing which to them, I quite believe, does not appear perfectly natural and right. The present Government of South Africa is government by the commandoes. They have been put into power by the British Government. His Majesty's present advisers have from the first moment of their coming into office steadily pursued a policy which I will not say was intended to result—I do not know that, nor do I wish to go into questions of motive—but which certainly was bound to result, and which as a matter of fact has resulted, in placing all political power in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony in the hands of those who in the late South African struggle fought against this country to the last, and in the Cape in the hands of the party which during that same struggle to a great extent actively assisted, and in any case altogether sympathised with our opponents. Under these circumstances the position of those South Africans, who in that struggle fought

for or sympathised with this country, is evidently not an enviable one. It is inevitable that they should be made to feel, some in a greater and some in a less degree, that their fortunes have undergone a great change for the worse, that they should look forward to the future with anxiety, and realise that they have an uphill fight before them to maintain their own character, traditions, and ideals, and to preserve for themselves and their children any substantial influence in moulding the future destinies of South Africa. They see changes being made in the laws in respect of education, of language, of local government, of which they do not approve. They regard them, and rightly regard them, as part of a general change of system which will make the South Africa of the future resemble in many, though not in all, respects the South Africa of pre-war days, and certainly make it very unlike the British South Africa of which they had fondly dreamed. Add to this that many of them, I speak especially of those who held office during the temporary period of Crown Colony Government, have been treated with grave injustice, have been deprived of offices which they reasonably regarded as permanent, or have suffered reductions in salaries which they reasonably regarded as fixed.

But here let me say that for that injustice the present holders of power in South Africa are not the parties chiefly responsible. They might have acted with more consideration. In my opinion they would have been wise to do so. They would have been wise to avoid certain proceedings which, to put it mildly, have an unpleasant appearance of jobbery. They might have spared us the comedy of pretending that all these dismissals and reductions of pay are due to necessary retrenchment, when in view of the liberality of their expenditure in other respects—in such a matter as Ministerial salaries, for instance—they are evidently not so hard up as we are asked to believe. But these are details. On the main issue they are entitled to say that they were under no obligation to consider the interests of the officials of the late administration, when the British Government did not consider them. It was the

business of the British Government to safeguard the interests of men who had served it loyally before handing them over to the new rulers, who could not be expected to regard them with any degree of sympathy.

This business of the officials is a very deplorable business. It is a stain on the credit of our country. But it is only one conspicuous illustration of a policy which is altogether most deplorable. In my judgment this drastic revolution in South Africa could and ought to have been avoided. It was not only possible, but comparatively easy; it was the course naturally marked out for us, and from which it required strange perversity to depart, to pursue a policy which, while just and even generous to our former enemies, would not have been unjust to our friends; which would have involved no sudden *volte-face*; and which would have given the South Africa of the future not only a more British complexion, but would have preserved much of the good work of the past five years, the waste of which is a permanent injury to the country and to all its inhabitants, Dutch, British, or native. And when we hear what has happened spoken of as a great triumph of statesmanship, as if there were something wonderfully original or ingenious about just throwing up the cards; when we are told how generous we have been, at the expense, mind you, of our friends and of the future of the Empire; when we are told that our former enemies will always love us for it, just as we were told after the reversal of policy in 1881; when it is trumpeted abroad that racialism is dead in South Africa, although the policy at present being pursued is as unmistakably racial in spirit as that of the late government of the Cape (Dr. Jameson's government) was admittedly the reverse—I say when it is attempted to foist this version of South African affairs upon the public, it is not only justifiable, it is necessary, to enter once more a perfectly cool but emphatic protest against such illusions. In any case it would be far too early days to boast of the success of what has happened. The ink is hardly dry on these new constitutions. But what has transpired so far is, to

put it mildly, quite as calculated, far more calculated, to inspire us with uneasy forebodings than to justify premature rejoicing. There is indeed great jubilation that the present rulers of South Africa have accepted the flag. Were their friends here then really alarmed that they might already be pulling it down? For my part I never shared or encouraged such a fear. I believe they have once for all accepted it, and of that I am heartily glad. It may not mean all that the flag ought to mean. It may mean comparatively little. But it does always mean something. We have that much to the good any way. And we have this much further to the good, that the Boer Government of to-day—especially in the Transvaal—though not an atom less racial in spirit, is certainly very much more enlightened, much less corrupt, and much more susceptible to public opinion than in pre-war days. These things are the good points and they are important. But when you have said that, you have said all that is in any way encouraging. For the rest we may be as hopeful as we please—always a good thing to be hopeful. But we must not allow ourselves to confound hopes with realities.

And now, having sought quite dispassionately to bring before you the real state of affairs, let me ask what ought to be our own attitude in view of it? What can the Imperial South African Association, what can the friends of South Africa in this country, do to help under the circumstances? It is easy to say what they ought not to do. Their rôle in the future is necessarily different from their rôle in the past. It is a more restricted rôle. We may approve or disapprove of what has been done. But it is an accomplished fact, and we must look facts in the face. Direct interference from this country with the affairs of South Africa, except to safeguard some unmistakably Imperial interest, should be out of the question. I do not say it may not be attempted, but I say it would be wrong to attempt it. As a nation, we must stand by the consequences of what, as a nation, we have done. If there are any of those who in their disapproval of what may have

happened or may hereafter happen in South Africa, with that exception which I have already made, would like to throw the weight of the British Government, not the present Government, but any Government, into the scale to put things right, I would say to them: 'Beware how you embark on any course so fraught with inconsistency and danger. You will embarrass, much more than you will strengthen, those whom you wish to help, and you will excite resentment, and in this case justified resentment, in other quarters, among men who, however you disagree with them, are now your fellow-citizens, enjoying equal rights of self-government, and whom you have as little right to dictate to as they have to dictate to you. Moreover, you would be shaking a principle which, as far as the self-governing Dominions are concerned, is vital to the existence of the Empire.'

But if direct interference is out of the question, if our rôle, as I have said, is necessarily a more restricted one, it does not mean that there is nothing we can do, or that our interest in the welfare of South Africa will be, or ought to be, in any way abated. It is essential to the Imperial idea that the welfare of any part of the Empire should be regarded as a matter of vital interest to every other part, and there are many ways, short of direct interference, in which they can all help one another. We can and we ought to assist any good enterprise in South Africa which is of a non-political character. And even in affairs political we have a right to express, temperately and without the appearance of dictation, our own opinion. And the public opinion of the rest of the Empire is in these days of growing intimacy and closer communications a force of increasing importance in every portion of it. But in order that it may be a beneficial force it must be reasonable, and, above all, it must be well-informed. There is a great field of usefulness before those who seek to instruct the people of this country about the affairs of the out-lying parts of the Empire. That is another direction in which this Association can do a great deal. And in proposing, as I now have

the honour to do, the health of the Imperial South African Association, and coupling with it the name of Sir Gilbert Parker, who has done so much excellent work as Chairman of Committee, I may say that I feel sure that, under his guidance, no opportunity of good and useful work will be neglected, and that it will be done in a broad and liberal, and in no narrow, acrimonious spirit. The Association, I am sure, will direct its attention to illuminating the problems of the present and the future, and not dwell too exclusively on the controversies, though we cannot wholly escape them, which are the heritage of the past.

The question of absorbing immediate interest in South Africa is the question of the amalgamation of the several colonies into one self-governing Dominion. All parties are agreed as to the desirability of such amalgamation. The problem consists in overcoming the material obstacles in the way, and deciding the terms and the extent of the new union. These are questions for the people of South Africa to decide. But they are questions on which the friends of South Africa in this country are bound to form, and in considerate language to express, a well-instructed opinion. I will not attempt to enter into that question to-night. It is premature in any case to discuss details, but I may be allowed before sitting down to express a hope of a general character on two points, which are not of detail but of principle. In the first place, let me say that I trust that the dominant party in South Africa will not attempt to settle the question over the heads of the minority. Let it be a national settlement, in making which all parties are fairly represented, and in which they can all feel that they have had a share. That is a view which, as I read his words, has been lately expressed by Mr. Smuts, and I hope it is the view of all the South African governments. It is true that they might be able to settle the matter, so to speak, off their own bats, and in accordance merely with their own views and those of their supporters. But such a settlement would bring them a bitter harvest of resentment, of unrest, and of subsequent strife. Whatever the

temptation may be, and whatever the pressure on the part of their more extreme followers may be, they will, if they are true statesmen, eschew such a course. Now that is one big principle. The second is that in the South African constitution of the future due regard should be shown to the interests of the native population. South Africa must be a white man's country ruled by white men. But that does not mean that the natives should have no rights, or even that they should be debarred, for ever and in all cases, from any share of political influence. It must be the object of white statesmanship to raise the coloured populations, and it is inconsistent with that ideal to make an absolute bar, and to lay it down that no native, however high he may rise in the scale of civilisation, is ever to acquire the full rights of citizenship. Moreover, and this is for the immediate future of far greater importance, I trust that no attempt will be made to break up the native tribes or to deprive them, in their own districts, of a reasonable measure of self-government. Some of them, notably the Basuto, have shown themselves eminently capable of it. I note, as a fact of good augury, that a more liberal spirit in regard to native policy has latterly grown up among leading men in both the great white races. We cannot tell how far it may prevail, but we must do what we can to encourage it. My Lords and gentlemen, the future of South Africa is a vast unknown region, fraught with great possibilities of good and evil, both to ourselves and the Empire. I do not pretend that it is not a subject of anxiety, an anxiety which is not lessened by the fact that we can do comparatively so little to influence the course of affairs ; that we have parted too soon, as I think, with the power and the right to influence it. Whether South Africa will ultimately remain a part of the Empire, whether the Empire itself will tend to become more and more one body-politic, or more and more a mere geographical expression—these things are hidden to us behind the veil which no human foresight can penetrate. But in any case we wish her well, and mean to do anything in our

power, even if it be little, to promote her welfare. We wish her well because she is a sister nation, and we are anxious for the progress and development of every member of the Imperial family. But we wish her well also for her own sake. Whatever the political relations between us, the ties of other kinds, ties of kindred, of association, of common interests, must always be very close ones, and I am sure that among my audience to-night there are many who, like myself, have felt the fascination of South Africa, who will remain all their lives under its spell, and who have conceived an affection, which even war and profound political differences have not effaced, for every section of her people.

## WEYBRIDGE.—May 22, 1908

### *National Service and the Law*

[From a speech delivered at a meeting of the County of Surrey branch of the National Service League.]

The objects of the League are twofold: First to induce the people of this country to accept the principle that every able-bodied man of military age who is fit, is bound to be ready to take part in the defence of his country; and secondly, that in order to give practical effect to that principle, the law should provide for the military training of all our youths, with certain definite and well-recognised exceptions. These, however, should really be exceptional cases; the general rule should be military training, equally for men of all classes, enforced by law. This enforcement by law is what a great many people stick at. They say, 'We agree with you that it is the duty of every able-bodied man, in case of need, to take part in the defence of his country; we should be glad if they would all enlist in the Territorial Army; but the idea of compelling them to do it is contrary to our conception of the freedom which is so characteristic of our British race. And besides, is not a volunteer worth half a dozen men who are compelled to do a thing?' This is the difficulty I want to face. I do

not attempt to blink the fact that the programme of the National Service League cannot be carried out without compulsion. But is compulsion necessarily so odious? The compulsion would come from law, made by the chosen representatives of the majority of the people of the country. It follows, therefore, that at least a majority of the people would be compelling themselves. It is impossible to conceive such a great change being introduced except with an overwhelming force of public opinion behind it. It may be said: 'If the majority of the people are willing, what need have you for compelling law?' That is just where a great mistake is made. A national army is not going to create itself, however willing even the majority of the people may be. There must be organisation; there must be a carefully-worked-out system; and law alone can ensure that co-operation which is obviously essential to a great national system. Even a volunteer army is subject to discipline and compulsion at every turn; therefore the whole question is whether people are to be expected themselves to take the initiative in submitting to compulsion, or whether it is to be applied to every fit person without such individual initiative. Assuming it to be the deliberate conviction of the majority of the people of this country that military training should be general, what is the objection to making every man go up for training at a certain age? The law would merely be telling them how and when to do that, which the majority were perfectly willing to do. Granted that a minority are unwilling, or perhaps only reluctant, not keen enough themselves to take the initiative; are we to be content that the whole thing should be ruined, and the safety of this country jeopardised, because of the existence of that minority of laggards? I can understand a man saying that a national army is not necessary, but I cannot understand his agreeing that it is necessary, and yet leaving it to individual caprice or convenience to decide whether we should get it or not. People are compelled by law to be educated, to keep their houses in a certain state of sanitary repair, to drive on one side of the

road, to do a hundred and one things every day of their lives. In all these respects the majority coerce the minority, sometimes for trivial, sometimes for doubtful objects. But there is one object, in respect of which it is a terrible, an unspeakable thing to have such coercion; and that is precisely the supreme object of all—the defence of our country, of our lives and property, of all that is dear to us. With regard to this object alone, the will of the majority is to be impotent. No; I contend that a general system invoking the co-operation of all citizens is not merely the only way of ensuring a national army, but the only fair way of obtaining it, and it is just this fairness which, I believe, when the thing is properly understood, will make it generally acceptable. The average citizen, though the idea may at first be distasteful to him, will be perfectly willing to undergo military training if he is brought to recognise the necessity of it, and if his neighbours have got to undergo it too.

## ROYAL COLONIAL INSTITUTE.—June 16, 1908

### *The Two Empires*

I have to thank the council of the Royal Colonial Institute for their courtesy in allowing me to address you to-night without conforming to the usual practice of circulating a summary of my remarks beforehand. Owing to the number and variety of my engagements at this very busy season of the year, I have been unable to prepare my address in time to comply with this requirement, or indeed to prepare it at all with such care as, had it been possible, I should have been most anxious to give to a paper to be read before such a body as the Royal Colonial Institute. I must indeed ask for very special indulgence from my audience, consisting as it does of men who have great familiarity with Imperial questions, for what I cannot but feel will be a very inadequate contribution to the records of their proceedings. I cannot hope to say anything to-night which is likely to be new to them; indeed, I shall

not attempt it. My very modest aim is to put before them, perhaps in somewhat novel juxtaposition, a number of facts and tendencies with which we are all well acquainted, but the interaction of which and its consequences are, from their very familiarity, liable to be overlooked.

If I were obliged to give a title to the subject of my remarks, which I would prefer not to do, because they really will be of much too simple a character to justify anything so ambitious as a formal title, I should be inclined to call it 'The Two Empires.' I often wish that, when speaking of the British Empire—that is to say, of all the countries of which His Majesty is sovereign, *plus* the protectorates, we could have two generally recognised appellations by which to distinguish the two widely different and indeed contrasted types of state of which that Empire is composed. Contrasted, I mean, from the point of view of their political constitution, though the contrast, no doubt, as a general rule, has its foundation in racial, or, what comes to the same thing, climatic conditions. I am thinking of the contrast between the self-governing communities of European blood, such as the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, and the communities of coloured race, Asiatic, African, West Indian, or Melanesian, which, though often enjoying some measure of autonomy, are in the main subject to the Government of the United Kingdom.

The term British Empire of course includes them both, and it is necessary that it should include them both, because we have no other term for the King's dominions as a whole, and it is essential, even in our phraseology, to keep up the struggle for their unity. I say we must continue to have one name for the whole, and the only available name is 'Empire,' however much we may feel that as regards one of the two great divisions it is a misnomer, and a rather mischievous misnomer. But that being the case, it is certainly very unlucky that we have no convenient subtitles for the two groups, because in the absence of such distinctions it is hardly possible to make any general

statement at all about the British Empire, except that it is the British Empire, which is not radically false about one half of it.

Try to lay down any principle of Imperial policy which is not mere platitude and verbiage, and you will almost immediately be struck by the fact that, if it is really applicable to one of the great divisions of the Empire, it is inapplicable to the other. Of course, I do not ignore the fact that, within each of the two great divisions I have referred to, and especially within the second of them—what I will, for want of a better term, call the dependent, as distinct from the self-governing Empire—there are the greatest varieties of condition. But for all that the dependent Empire, as a whole, has certain features in common which distinguish it very sharply from the self-governing Empire. We talk of India and the Colonies, but that is not really the essential division. It is only the division with which our administrative arrangements make us familiar. Essentially India and the Crown colonies, greatly as they differ among themselves, are on one side of the dividing line, and the self-governing states on the other.

Incidentally, I may observe, though I only do so in passing—I do not wish to dwell upon the point—that the antiquated phraseology which still groups, shall I say, Australia and Labuan together as 'colonies,' and the antiquated system which leaves our relations with them to be dealt with by one office, are, I think, regrettable. It might not make much difference, but it would, as it seems, make some difference, and be of some advantage, if our language and our administrative arrangements alike corresponded a little more closely with the facts. But that is by the way. My real point goes somewhat deeper, and it is this—I do not know that I express it very well, but you will easily grasp my meaning—that in turning from questions affecting the self-governing, to those affecting the dependent Empire, or *vice versa*, we inevitably experience a change of atmosphere, or, to steal a striking

metaphor, we are sensible of 'a break of gauge,' which materially enhances the difficulty of grasping the problem as a whole or correlating our efforts for the development and consolidation of a political fabric at once so vast and so irregular.

Of course, what happens in practice is that we just go on from day to day, doing the best we can, meeting difficulties as they arise in a haphazard way, without much troubling to think out the situation as a whole, or to form any very definite views as to the future. I do not wish to depreciate this method. Many of the greatest achievements in history have come about in this way. The founders of our Empire in particular often built better than they knew. We have seen a mere trading settlement, almost accidentally, and without doubt undesignedly, grow into a great Empire. But for all that it is well, from time to time, to try and think things out, to look ahead, to realise what our ultimate objects are, if we have any ultimate objects.

Now, speaking broadly, what are the aims of a constructive Imperial statesmanship, if we think any such thing possible or desirable? Clearly there are, as it seems to me, looking at the position very broadly, two main objects, very diverse in character—one is to implement the desire for union, for practical co-operation, for a common policy in pursuit of their common interests, which I believe animates the bulk of the people in all the self-governing states of the Empire. We want to prevent them drifting into the position of wholly separate political entities. That is what is generally at the back of people's minds when they use such phrases as 'the consolidation of the Empire.' This is the idea underlying such an institution as the Imperial Conference, though so far the deliberations of that body have not brought us sensibly nearer to its realisation. But there is another object, which we talk much less about, though to many of us it may seem more important or at least more attainable. I mean the retention and the development of the dependent Empire, and

especially, of course, of India, which is still, and probably always will be, far the greatest of our possessions. And by development I mean making the most of it in every way, not only of its material resources, but of the capacities of its people, including their capacity for self-government, as far as it can be carried subject to our supreme control and sovereignty. To many people, as I have said, this seems the greater object of the two. Personally I do not go that length. If I had to choose between an effective union of the great self-governing states of the Empire without the dependent states, and the retention of the dependent states accompanied by complete separation from the distant communities of our own blood and language, I should choose the former. But, on the other hand, I fully recognise that a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush. Anything like Imperial federation—the effective union of the self-governing states—is not, indeed, as some think, a dream, but is certainly at present little more than an aspiration, though the sentiment which makes it an aspiration possible of attainment is one of greatly growing force. But the dependent Empire is a great present fact. There is no doubt about its actuality or its immense importance. And certainly we should be mad if in the pursuit of any more distant and doubtful object, however attractive, we neglected the development or the defence of those great possessions which are absolutely ours to-day.

Do not let me be supposed to suggest that there is anything incompatible in the pursuit of both these ends. On the contrary, I hope to show how greatly success in the one is dependent on success in the other. I am only trying to realise the full extent of the problem, and in doing so I am confronted by the existence of these two separate tasks, both difficult, both vast, and yet very dissimilar in their character. We have no option but to face them both. And in essaying the double task we have, as it seems to me, to avoid two opposite errors—the error of forgetting their diverse nature, and thoughtlessly apply-

ing principles, which have been proved sound under one set of conditions, in quarters where the conditions are wholly different; and, on the other hand, the error of thinking that, because the problems are so diverse, they are unconnected, and that we can afford to deal with them as if they had no connection, and to neglect the many ways in which our efforts to solve them may, so to speak, be dovetailed and rendered mutually supporting. The former error is that of ignorance and inexperience; the latter, on the contrary, to which the expert may be even more prone than the ignoramus, is the error of rigidity and want of imagination. Let me briefly, very briefly, try to explain what I mean in either case.

Against the error which I have described as that of ignorance and inexperience, it is not necessary to warn an audience such as this. I am almost ashamed to utter in your presence such a platitude as that the idea of extending what is described as 'Colonial Self-Government' to India, which seems to have a fascination for some untutored minds, is a hopeless absurdity. When I say that, do not let me be thought to ignore the importance of giving native capacity for government all the scope we can, a principle of which we see the successful application in some of the native states. Next to the urgent economic problem, this must always be, I take it, the first solicitude of Anglo-Indian statesmanship. But quite clearly constitutional development in India cannot possibly be on colonial lines. It must be not only much more gradual in time, but wholly different in direction. This, I venture to think, is obvious. Not equally obvious, perhaps—and, indeed, this is a point on which I am prepared for much criticism—is my view, that we should lose no opportunity of interesting the other self-governing states of the Empire—other, I mean, than the United Kingdom itself—in the dependent Empire. I may say frankly what is in my mind about this. In the long, long run—and please remember that my whole purpose to-night is a peep into the somewhat distant future—I cannot picture the people of these islands alone remain-

ing solely responsible for the dependent Empire, carrying the whole of the 'white man's burden,' as far as it falls—and it does very largely fall—on the British race. Surely it is a terrible piece of waste and a clear proof of the defective nature of our present political organisation that Englishmen, Scotsmen, or Irishmen going to live in a British community over-seas under the British flag should by that mere act of locomotion, without any change of political status at all, or any desire to make such a change, cease to have any part or lot in the affairs of these vast dominions, of which while resident here they were among the ultimate rulers, should lose all share in the duties, responsibilities, and, I may add, privileges of that great position. Logically, the thing is quite indefensible; practically it is bound to be detrimental, and may even ultimately prove fatal, to the maintenance of the Imperial fabric. As a race we cannot afford to give up so much of our best blood and stamina, to discharge it, so to speak, from all further duty in respect of one at least of the greatest of our national tasks. And so it is, in my opinion, essential always to keep a firm grip of the guiding principle, that in our management of the dependent Empire we, the people of the United Kingdom, are only the trustees for the whole family of British states. The control and management of that dependent Empire, in so far as it has to be external control and management—I mean in so far as these countries are obliged to rely on something more than native ability and authority for their civilisation and development—the whole control, as I say, at present rests with the people of the United Kingdom. Under existing circumstances there are many reasons why it must so rest. For one thing, the younger countries have, for the time being, their hands quite full with their internal development. For another, they have, owing to a narrow outlook and false political philosophy—which is not peculiar to them, but which has too long affected the whole race—failed to rise to the conception of what is involved in citizenship of a world-wide state. I say for the present the responsibility for

the dependent Empire must rest with us alone. But that it always must, ought, or can so rest, I do not for a moment admit. And as a wise father trains his sons in time to the management of the family property and the discharge of the duties which it involves, I hold that we too should look ahead, and anticipating the day when we must either have the help of the younger nations in maintaining our common heritage, or be prepared to see it dwindle, seize every opportunity which offers itself of bringing them into closer contact with all that is involved in its preservation.

Now that is a suggestion which I am sure will have terrors for many people—not unnaturally. They may say, 'it is bad enough to be threatened with the interference of British political busybodies in such a delicate business as, for instance, the government of India. It would be finally hopeless if we had the people of the self-governing colonies poking their noses into it also, especially when they are, as we see, from their anti-Asiatic prejudices, so lacking in the intelligence and sympathy requisite for dealing with it wisely.' Personally I draw quite a different lesson from what we shall all agree to be the most unfortunate conflict which has arisen between the people of the self-governing states of the Empire and its coloured subject races over the question of immigration. To my mind it is not so much an illustration of the evil of colonial interference with the affairs of the dependent Empire, as it is a proof of the danger which we run from the fact that colonial acquaintance with, and interest in, that Empire is still so limited. If there were more interdependence there would be less misunderstanding. As regards this particular question of the free immigration of Indian or other coloured people, being British subjects, into the self-governing states, I think that there are considerable faults on both sides. I hold that we in this country are to blame for failing to appreciate the many sound and reputable reasons (though I do not deny that there are also bad and despicable ones) which make the people of the Colonies so opposed to the permanent settlement of alien coloured races, even

if they be British subjects, among them. They are threatened with a danger of which we have no experience, and they are in my opinion quite right to guard against it. No one who has lived among them will fail to appreciate the causes of their anxiety on this subject, or lightly will condemn them for that anxiety. On the other hand they are, no doubt, often to blame for the harsh, unjust, and unreasonable form which their anxiety, however just and reasonable in itself, often takes. If it were not too serious, one would be tempted to smile at the crude ignorance which makes so many of them confound all men of coloured race, from the high-class and cultured Asiatic gentleman or noble, to the humblest coolie, in the common category of 'niggers.' But I do not know that home Britons would be much better if they had not had for many years the education which responsibility for the dependent Empire gives, and especially if they had not so many men living among them who have had lifelong experience of the coloured races of the Empire. Our colonial fellow-citizens, devoid of all sense of responsibility in the matter, and without that expert guidance which we enjoy, are largely at the mercy of the primitive and untutored instinct of aversion from alien races. I have often thought, when I was confronted with some outburst of anti-Asiatic prejudice in South Africa, what a difference it would have made if there had been only a few men in the country, themselves South Africans, who had ever been members of the Indian Civil Service. For my experience is that the coloured races under British rule have no sturdier champions than the British officials who have lived and worked amongst them. Even in South Africa itself I have seen the same influences at work with regard to the attitude of the South African whites to their own native population, an attitude which, I am glad to think, is undergoing a steady change for the better. Among the most liberal-minded guides of public opinion are those South Africans, who as magistrates in native districts have come into the closest touch with the native population.

If ever we are inclined self-righteously to contrast our own comparative liberality and freedom from prejudice in regard to coloured races with the crude sentiments of our white fellow-citizens in the younger states, let us bear in mind the causes which account for the difference. And let us draw the moral, that the more we can associate them with ourselves in knowledge of and responsibility for the dependent Empire, the more we may expect to see their attitude towards its coloured races develop in intelligence and liberality.

In any case it is clear that the relations between the self-governing and the dependent Empire are bound to become closer. On certain points—it is true these are only, so to speak, the fringes of our tropical and sub-tropical possessions—the two Empires are already in contact. I need only point to the growing interest of Canada in the West Indies, or to the still greater interest of Australia and New Zealand in the British dependencies in the Pacific. Moreover there is a great question, which has as yet received but little attention, but which is bound to come into prominence within a few years, the question of the boundary of South Africa on the north, and of the political future of the great purely native territories beyond the Zambesi. No doubt even these questions are as yet only, so to speak, in their infancy; and they are only forerunners of a new chapter in Imperial development, fraught with many dangers and difficulties, but fraught also with great possibilities, which will occupy a large space in the history of the century that is still young. I can do nothing more than indicate them to-night. It would be beyond my purpose, and indeed altogether beyond my powers, to lay down rules for our guidance in the new maze into which we are about to enter.

But there is one general principle which seems to me to result clearly from the imminence of the problems which I have sought to adumbrate. It is the urgent need of a better organisation of the Empire, which shall enable the people of this country and those of the younger states to prepare in time to deal with the dependent Empire, as

indeed with all their common interests, on the basis of partnership. It may be many years before the younger states are able or willing to share with us in the burden of the dependent Empire as a whole. But there are parts of it in which their interest is already great, and there is no part of it in which their interest is not increasing. Do not let us imagine that it is a matter of complete indifference to them even now. If we look at the influences which tend to keep them within the Empire, the strongest no doubt is affinity of race, but certainly the next strongest —and it is an influence of rapidly increasing importance as their relations with the outside world develop and their outlook widens—is pride in the vast extent and diversity of the British dominions. And observe that, while the tie of race is confined after all only to a portion—the majority, no doubt, but still only a portion—of their inhabitants, this other attraction, their sense of pride in belonging to so great a State, is not confined to those of them who are of British race. It is the common privilege of all British citizens, and it will be found to be a sentiment of great potency if we learn how to appeal to it.

But we must always bear in mind the saying of the Canadian statesman: 'If you want our help, you must call us to your councils.' A real Council of the Empire, be it in the first instance only a consultative body, is becoming every day a more urgent necessity. It is a necessity, because every year brings up fresh questions in which the new Dominions, though they have no representation in the British Parliament, are as much interested as the United Kingdom, and because it is our cue to welcome and encourage and not to repress that interest. It is a necessity, because there is no other means of preserving Imperial questions from the corroding influence of British party politics, and because with all its crudeness and inexperience there is a robustness and a sanity about the colonial attitude on these questions, which would be a wholesome corrective to certain tendencies among ourselves. It is a necessity above all because, however numerous and diverse the problems of our Empire are—indeed just because they

are so numerous and diverse—we cannot hope to deal with them on any coherent plan, unless there is somewhere in our system a point from which these problems can at least be seen and considered as a whole. The great straggling body needs a central brain, and till that want is supplied, we shall not have taken even the first step to reshaping our political machinery and making it less hopelessly inadequate to the new conditions.

## CONSTITUTIONAL CLUB.—JUNE 26, 1908

### *Tariff Reform and National Security*

[From a speech at a dinner given by the Constitutional Club, Mr. Edward Goulding, M.P., presiding, and in acknowledging the toast of Lord Milner's health proposed by Mr. Bonar Law.]

THERE is one thing which ought always to have the highest place in the thoughts of those who are responsible for the government of the country, and that is the national security. No object, however good in itself, ought ever to be pursued to the neglect or the detriment of this supreme end. But Tariff Reform, so far from being detrimental to a policy directed to increasing our national strength, is calculated to subserve it, and to do so in many more ways than one. In the greatest of all its aspects—I mean in its relation to the development of the man power of the whole Empire—it seems to me essential to the only ultimate solution of the problem of Imperial defence. And in the field of social reform there are few important movements which are not connected at some point with a modification of our fiscal system. I am not thinking merely of our need of fresh sources of revenue, though that need is becoming daily more apparent.

But take such a question as the repeopling of the country districts.

We are all, I take it, anxious to see more small land-holders, and I may say, speaking for myself at any rate, landowners. But it is not enough to throw a few acres of land at the head of a man, even of a well-qualified man, and expect him to live by them. A great deal more is

required than the provision of land in order to make the thing a success. It will require organised co-operation between groups of small holders or owners. It will require as I believe, a certain measure of protection, it may be only of temporary protection, to give the groups of small landowners a start. I am not thinking of protection of the type of the old high duties upon wheat, but rather of moderate duties on those other agricultural products, in which small owners are likely in this country to find the most profitable scope. Or take again such a question as the reform of our Poor Law. We are all agreed in desiring to see a better form of provision than the workhouse for the aged and deserving poor. But indiscriminate old age pensions after seventy, even if that is the best use for so many millions of money in the interests of the poor themselves, are not going to solve the problem of the relief of poverty in its many aspects, still less to strike at that most fertile source of poverty—unemployment, or irregular employment, and the resulting demoralisation. Other concurrent remedies, such as better industrial training, and the organisation of labour registries, are, indeed, necessary. But we shall never reduce the evil within a tolerable compass as long as we continue to show our present gross disregard for the undermining of great industries, like the hop-growing industry, and the pouring of the people engaged in them into the already over-filled ranks of casual labour. It is, indeed, the vast mass, and the, I fear, increasing mass of that body of casual labour which seems to me the gravest of all our social problems. It must be attacked, as I have said, in many ways ; but, however you attack it, however hard you pump out this reservoir of casual labour, you will always have leaks in the wall through which it will fill again, as long as you cling blindly to a system which prevents your defending your present industries against insidious attack, or starting new industries, like beet sugar cultivation for instance, which need to be shielded at the outset. Orthodox Free Traders like Mill used to defend the protection of infant industries in new countries. Some of his modern followers,

seeing whither the argument leads, have now abandoned it on the ground that you cannot choose or feed your infants wisely. I maintain both that you can choose them wisely, and that, so chosen, they need to be shielded in an old country just as much as in a new one.

My point is this, that whichever way I turn I find the road blocked by our desperate clinging to an antiquated theory. And so it is that I come to put Fiscal Reform first, though you must not regard me as identifying first with highest. Fiscal Reform is, after all, only a means, one of the means to greater ends. But on practical grounds there is very good reason to put it first; because it can ill afford to wait. It can ill afford to wait because there are a number of industries, sound in themselves and suitable to the natural conditions of this country, which are being undermined to-day, and which we shall bitterly regret when we have lost them. And it can even less afford to wait, because, unless it comes soon, it may come too late for us to use it, or, at any rate, to use it as effectively as we might to-day, in laying the foundations of a commercial system which shall constitute a link between the different states of the Empire.

## THE CANADIAN CLUB, VANCOUVER.—OCTOBER 9, 1908

### *Imperial Unity—External Advantages*

[This speech, and the six which immediately follow it, were delivered during Lord Milner's first visit to Canada in the Autumn of 1908.]

THIS is the first time I have had the privilege of addressing one of those Canadian Clubs which now, I believe, exist in most of the great towns of the Dominion, and which, inasmuch as they allow free expression to every form of opinion, are calculated to exercise a most important influence on the development of the intellectual and social, and, using the word in its best sense, the political life of Canada. I am very grateful for the opportunity you have afforded me, but I hope you will not expect a long or momentous oration. I am not by training an orator, but

an administrator, and I have come to Canada not to preach but to learn. For many years I have heard and read a great deal about this country. It is one which looms large and ever larger in the thought and interest of all those who care about the British Empire. It is destined to take a very important place, perhaps in time even the first place, in the world-wide group of sister nations which we designate by that term.

Now ever since I have thought about such things at all, I have striven to be a devoted citizen of Greater Britain. I have spent the best years of my life in its service, and now that I am out of official harness I have no higher ambition than to be regarded as a man who, though he may live almost entirely in the Old Country, does not belong to it exclusively, but belongs to the whole Empire; one who, at any rate, is capable of understanding and sympathising with the people of what I may call the younger nations of the Empire; who realises their difficulties, sympathises with their aspirations, and who can always be relied upon to take a fair, an intelligent, and a helpful view of any questions affecting them in their relations to the United Kingdom or to one another.

Now that you will say is a tall order. I am quite aware of it. I know that it is a big ambition to be an all-round British citizen, not to say an all-round British statesman. I dare say I may make a great mess of it—perhaps no man living can make a complete success in that field; but whether I succeed or whether I fail, it is an honourable ambition and one with which I think you are bound to sympathise.

At any rate, you will see why it was a matter of supreme interest to me to become better acquainted with Canada. Though I have long been a student of Canadian affairs, though I have many Canadian friends, made in the Old Country, and made perhaps more especially in South Africa, I have never actually been in Canada till the last three weeks. It is just twenty days to-day since I landed at Quebec, and I have never felt more than during my present journey what an enormous difference it makes, however much you may have studied a subject or thought about

it, to be able to see things for yourself. It is true that I have only rushed through the Dominion; I am the last man to think that so hasty a visit entitles me to pose as an authority on Canadian affairs. Nothing could be more intolerable—don't I know it?—than the globe-trotter who dashes through a country in a few days, and then thinks he knows all about it, when all he really knows is the inside of two or three hotels. I assure you, gentlemen, I have suffered from him in my time just as much as any of you, and I am not going to imitate him.

Take British Columbia alone. It would take months to go through it, and years to know it. But for all that I do know it a great deal better than I did a week ago. And this is true of all my experiences in this country. I feel I realise with greater vividness than I expected, not only the vastness and the immense possibilities of the Dominion, but also the differences, I might almost say the contrasts, which exist between different parts of it.

That is, so far, the dominant impression left upon my mind. I may be entirely wrong; you will not be hard upon me if I am. First impressions are often wrong, and I am merely telling you frankly, as I believe you would wish me to speak, how the matter strikes me, not in any dogmatic way, but because it is sometimes interesting and useful to know how things, with which one is very familiar, so familiar perhaps that one has ceased to think about them, strike a man who sees them for the first time.

I have been deeply impressed not only by the extent of the country, but by the fact that I seem to have been travelling not through one, but through four different countries; and that, although, to my great regret, I have not been able to visit, and I fear shall not be able to visit, on this occasion, the Maritime Provinces on the far Atlantic. And so I realise better than ever how bold was the conception of those who first grasped the idea of moulding all Canada from Cape Breton to Vancouver Island into one great Confederation. They were great political architects, who leaped the intervening wilderness, as it then was,

between Ontario and British Columbia. Of course, it was only the common flag, it was only the fact that that flag had been kept flying in British Columbia here on the shores of the Pacific, which made that union possible in the first instance. Had you and those who came before you not kept that flag flying here, as I believe you always will keep it flying, that great transcontinental state, the creation of which presented such difficulties in any case, would have been a sheer impossibility. The old Crown colony of British Columbia, that outpost of Empire, has therefore an importance in world history which is not generally recognised.

But, after all, the common flag, in this as in other cases, was only a great opportunity. It may mean everything or it may mean very little, according as the opportunity is neglected or developed. In this case, human genius and energy made the most of the opportunity, and the success was beyond all human anticipation. The builders builded better than they knew. But it is one thing to bring several distant and diverse communities into one political union ; it is another to inspire them with a common soul. Many people doubted when the Confederation was first formed, whether it was possible for the British communities of North America, with all their differences of race, with all the physical obstacles to their intercourse, with all the external attractions drawing them away from one another, to develop a common national life. The event has proved that this fear was unfounded.

Immense as has been the development of the material resources of the country, and it is only just beginning, there is another development, not less important, not less momentous, though it has perhaps attracted less attention in the world; I mean the growth of a common devotion to their common country among the inhabitants of all parts of Canada ; the growth of a Canadian spirit, a Canadian patriotism. And that without any loss of individuality in the several communities. If men had sought to ignore the differences of character and history, if they had sought

to force what are now the provinces of Canada into one common mould, Confederation would have been a failure. It was only by recognising local life and local independence, it was only by combining independence in local affairs with an effective union for common affairs, by unity in diversity, that this country has been built up. Canadian patriotism has not grown at the expense of local patriotism, but in addition to it.

And there is a greater and wider lesson in that. How will this growth of Canadian patriotism affect Imperial interests? There are people, perhaps many people, who think that Canadian patriotism will tend to draw Canada away from the sister nations into an isolated existence, isolated though no doubt powerful. I do not, myself, share that feeling. May I tell you how I have heard it put more than once during my visit to Canada? People have said to me, people whose opinion I feel bound to respect, 'Canada is a land inhabited by people of various races and of different origin and traditions; it is possible to make them all good Canadians, but it is not possible to make them all good Britishers': and, in a sense, no doubt, that is true; but I for my part shall be satisfied if they all become good Canadians. I do not, myself, fear that the growth of a distinct Canadian type of character, of a strong Canadian patriotism, is going to be a danger to the unity of the Empire.

My faith in the British Empire, which is something different from an Empire of England, or even of the United Kingdom, is stronger than that. It is not reasonable to expect that men who are not of British race, or who, though originally of British race, may have become alienated from British traditions, should be Imperialists from love of Great Britain. But I think the time will come when they may be Imperialists from love of Canada. Let them only learn to love Canada, the country of their adoption, or in the next generation the country of their birth, let them care greatly for Canada, and let them and those Canadians who are of British birth unite in the development of a strong

local patriotism. The more they all care for Canada, the more ambitious they are for her, the more proud they are of her, the more I believe they will appreciate the position of world-wide influence and power which is open to her as a member of the British Empire.

I am not speaking of what exists to-day. I am thinking of the future. How are these things going to work out? Canada is going to be a great country in any case, one of the great countries of the world. But she will not be unique in that. There are some other countries her equals in extent, and which, even with her vast development, will be far more than her equals in population. The time will come when with the growth of her population and trade she will have interests in every part of the world. How is she going to defend them? Sooner or later she will have to enter the field of world-politics. What will she find there? Nations, not a few now, and there are going to be more, who count their armed men by millions, and their giant battleships by scores. Is she going to compete on that scale with the armaments of the great world-Powers? Or is she going back to take a seat, and a back seat, mind you, not only in war but in peace? Wars between great nations are going to be rarer and rarer as time passes. But every year and every day, not only on the rare occasions when nations actually fight, the power of fighting exercises its silent, decisive influence on the history of the world. It is like the cash reserve of some great solvent bank. How often is it necessary actually to disburse those millions, the existence of which, in the background, nevertheless affects the bank and everybody who deals with it all the time? It is credit which determines the power and influence of nations just as it does the fate of any business. Credit in business rests ultimately on the possession or command of cash, though the owners may never actually have to produce it. And so the influence and authority of a nation, its power to defend its rightful interests, depend ultimately on that fighting strength in war, which it nevertheless may never be called upon to use. See what is

happening in Europe to-day. International boundaries are being altered. Solemn treaties are being torn up. Yet not a shot has been fired, probably not a shot will be. The strong will prevail and the weak will go to the wall without any such necessity.

Is Canada, as she grows and her external relations increase, going to allow herself, I will not say to be invaded, but just to be hustled and pushed off the pavement, whenever it suits any stronger power ?

Or is she going to rely for protection on some friendly neighbour such as the United States ? I do not think that either course would be consonant with the dignity or self-respect of Canadians. But are they, then, to be compelled to compete in armaments with the great world-Powers, to turn aside from the development of this great country, which demands all the energies and resources of a far larger population than it has, in order to build up great armies and navies ? Not at all. There is another alternative, easier, much easier, much more natural and much more effective. I have said that Canada is not unique in being a great country. But she is unique in being one of a group of countries, which has a strong foothold in every corner of the world. That group only needs to hold together and to be properly organised, in order to command, with a comparatively small cost to its individual members, all the credit and all the respect, and, therefore, all the power and all the security, which credit and respect alone can give a nation among the nations of the world. No doubt Canada, if she is to take her place in such a union, will have to develop, as I believe she will desire to develop, her own fighting strength. But not to a greater extent than would be necessary in any case for the adequate development of Canadian self-respect, or beneficial to the manhood of her people, and certainly nothing like to the same extent as would be absolutely inevitable if she desired to stand alone. Without any loss of individuality, without any excessive strain upon her resources, it is within her power to enjoy all the glory and all the benefits of that

great position, not only on this continent, but throughout the world, in which every self-governing community under the British Crown is equally entitled to participate. Canada would be greater, far greater, as a member, perhaps in time the leading member, of that group of powerful though pacific nations, than she ever could be in isolation.

One word in conclusion, to obviate any misunderstanding. If I contemplate a future in which Canada will contribute more than she does to-day to the maintenance of Imperial power, do not suppose that I underestimate what Canadians have already done, or what they are even now doing for the common cause. I ought to be the last to forget, and I never shall forget what Canadians did at a supreme crisis in the history of the Empire in South Africa; and I fully realise that the mere development of a great country like this within the Empire must of itself tend constantly to enhance the prestige and potential strength of the Empire as a whole. The last thing that would occur to me would be to lecture Canadians on their duty. It is in no such spirit that I have ventured to point out that the greatness of the Empire to which they belong is a matter of deep concern to Canadians as Canadians, whether they be of British origin or not, and that there is no contrast, but rather a necessary connection, between Canadian and Imperial patriotism. Let that once be recognised, and I have no doubt whatever that the people of Canada will draw for themselves the inferences which their interest and their dignity alike dictate. They will claim, and rightly claim, to have a greater voice in controlling the policy of the whole Empire. In my opinion that will be an unmitigated advantage all round. I could quote instances, but it would take me too long, in which, as I think, Imperial policy would never have gone astray, if the opinion of the younger nations could have been brought to bear upon it. It is high time that those who guide the destiny of the Empire should learn to look at international problems, not only from the point of view of the United Kingdom and its immediate dependencies, but from that

of the Empire at large. The younger nations will wish to make their voices heard, and the sooner they do it the better. And in proportion as they claim an influence on Imperial policy they will recognise of themselves the necessity of increasing Imperial strength.

I thank you for the kindness and patience with which you have listened to me. I hope I have not trespassed too much upon your time. The questions I have discussed are questions about which there must be great differences of opinion here, as in any other portion of the Empire. I have stated my own position, and have stated it frankly, and I now leave these two matters with you for your own consideration: first, the necessity of national strength not only for purposes of war, but for purposes of peace and peaceful development; and, second, the evidence which your own history affords, that there is no incompatibility between local and national patriotism, as there is, in my opinion, no incompatibility between Canadian national patriotism and the wider patriotism of the Empire.

## THE CANADIAN CLUB, WINNIPEG.—OCTOBER 15, 1908

### *Imperial Unity—Internal Benefits*

SPEAKING last week to the Canadian Club of Vancouver, I dwelt at some length upon what I conceive to be the advantages which Canada and other members of the British Imperial family, such as Australia, New Zealand, or, for that matter, the United Kingdom itself, derive to-day, and may derive in still larger measure in the future, from facing the world as a single great power. If any one is sufficiently interested in the matter, and cares to see what I said then, there is a full report of my remarks, not indeed a faultless one, but a wonderfully good one, in the Vancouver *Daily News-Advertiser* of 10th October. I do not wish to repeat myself, and I shall deal with quite a different aspect of the life of the Empire to-day. But there are just one or two things which I must repeat, though

I shall do so as briefly as I can, in order to explain to you from what point of view I approach the subject.

The word British, as applied to the Empire, does not mean English, nor yet English, Scotch and Irish all together. The Empire is not something belonging to the United Kingdom any more than to Canada, or to Australia, or to any other single portion of it. All the subjects of the King ought to be equal sharers in it, and so to regard themselves. For my own part, I firmly refuse, and shall always refuse, to regard any quarter of the Empire as otherwise than a part of my country, or its inhabitants otherwise than as my fellow-citizens, my fellow-countrymen, and that not because I happen to be an Englishman. If I were a Canadian, I should feel, and be entitled to feel, precisely the same. No doubt since the Empire has tumbled up in a very casual manner, and its organisation is still very imperfect, this view is to-day somewhat a 'counsel of perfection.' The people of the United Kingdom do in fact at the present time control the foreign policy of the Empire, and provide for its defence, in a very different measure from the inhabitants of other parts of it. But that is a state of affairs which I hope to see gradually altered, as it has been to some extent altered already. A good deal has been said recently about the self-governing states of the Empire, other than the United Kingdom, taking a greater share in Imperial defence. I think that is right, and I believe that they recognise it. But from my point of view it is no less essential that they should take their part in moulding Imperial policy. For instance, and by way of illustration only, they all contributed to our success in the South African war. It was right that they should do so, for the great issue at stake there was not of local but of general interest. But though they took part in the war, their participation in South African affairs ended with its conclusion. It was regarded as a matter of course that the United Kingdom alone should deal with the situation in South Africa as the war left it. In my opinion, the policy to be adopted after the war

should have been, like the war itself, the business of the whole Empire, and not of the United Kingdom only. If Canada, Australia, New Zealand had had a voice in it, if the organisation of the Empire had been sufficiently advanced to make that course practicable, I think we should see a more satisfactory state of affairs in South Africa than we do to-day.

That, then, is my position, the position of an Imperial Unionist, using that word in its broadest and in no party sense—a Unionist in that I wish to see all our common affairs the subject of common management in peace as much as in war. If wars were altogether to cease, as we all hope and believe that they will grow less and less frequent, I should not on that account attach less importance to a united Empire.

And now only one more reference to what I said at Vancouver. In answer to those who hold that the growth of a Canadian spirit, of Canadian patriotism, in which I rejoice, is incompatible with the Imperial idea, I tried to point out how decisively the history of this country itself belies such fears. There are no greater contrasts within the British Empire to-day, or at any rate within the self-governing states, than existed in Canada before Confederation, and indeed still exist. You had physical distance and inaccessibility. Nova Scotia is farther from British Columbia than from Great Britain, and the then unbridged prairies and Rocky Mountains were out and away a greater obstacle to intercourse than the Atlantic Ocean. You had likewise differences of race. But in spite of all these, United Canada is a great accomplished fact to-day. And it has become so without loss of individuality in the several and very diverse states which compose it, and without violence being done to their distinctive character and traditions. The principles which have been so satisfactory in the making of Canada are applicable in a wider field.

And Canada is not the only example. The history of our race and of other kindred races for hundreds of years shows many instances in which, never, indeed, without

doubt, opposition, and criticism at the outset, but with complete success in the end, independent communities, intensely jealous of their independence, have nevertheless solved the problem of effective and enduring union for common purposes, without injury to their individual characters and patriotism. There is nothing at all new in the idea. What is novel is the largeness of the scale on which it is sought to realise it. But then the novel conditions of human life, the great and progressive improvement in the means of travel and communication, the triumphs of science over distance—what has been called the ' shrinkage of the world '—are favourable to political architecture on a large scale. Imperialists are only men who realise the facts of the world they live in, who have grasped the bearing and consequences of the changes, to which I have referred, rather sooner than other people.

And now, gentlemen, I have done with my recapitulation. I am going to break new ground. Enough has been said, for the moment, about the value of Imperial unity for purposes of external protection. Let us look at it to-day in its bearing on internal development. We Imperialists are frequently represented as people who think only of national power, of armies, and navies, and of cutting a big figure in the world ; in fact, in one word, of the material and external aspect of national life. Most emphatically do I enter my protest against any such misconception. Give me that political organism, be it small or large, which affords to its members the best opportunities of self-development, of a healthy and many-sided human existence. I believe that the close association of the several peoples under the British Crown, their leading a common national life, tends to promote these things, and that there would be a distinct and immense loss, if the tie were broken, alike to the various communities as wholes and to all the individuals who compose them.

Take first the individual. We live in a migratory age, and mankind, as far as one can foresee, is likely to become more rather than less migratory. Men find the older

countries too crowded, and go forth to seek fresh opportunities and more elbow-room in the new, or they go for purposes of business and study, or from mere inclination, from the new to the old. Again there is a growing intercourse, this for business reasons mainly, between the tropic and the temperate zones, and generally between countries of diverse climate and products. The economic interdependence of the different parts of the world is constantly increasing this tendency.

Now, in this constant movement, so characteristic of our age, the citizens of a world-wide state have a great advantage. The British Empire, comprising, as it does, so large an area in both hemispheres, and in every continent on the globe, containing every variety of climate and product, and almost every form of human activity and enterprise, offers to every born subject of the king, of European race, a varied choice of domicile within its own borders, and opportunities of migration without expatriation, which no other state in the world affords. The United States probably come nearest to it in this respect, but the United States are not its equal in the number and variety of the opportunities which they offer to their citizens within the confines of their own country.

It is no exaggeration to say that, without exception, British citizenship is the most valuable citizenship in the whole world. Regarded as a free pass, it has the widest currency. The man of white race who is born a British subject can find a home in every portion of the world where he can live under his own flag, enjoying the same absolute freedom, and the same protection for person or property as he has always enjoyed; using his own language, and possessing, from the first moment that he sets foot there, the full rights of citizenship. And that without sacrificing anything, without forswearing his allegiance to the land of his birth, as he must do in order to obtain citizen rights in any foreign country.

It is needless to dwell on the vast advantage which it is to the people of the United Kingdom to be able to make

homes for themselves in so many parts of the new world, without ceasing to be Britons. There is nothing which more excites the envy and admiration of foreign nations. But is there no corresponding advantage to the younger nations of the British family in the fact that they have a home, and a footing, and a place as of right, in the old world, which no other denizens of the new world possess? Take the people of the great republic on your borders. They come to Europe as visitors by tens and hundreds of thousands, and many of them come to stay. And welcome visitors they are, especially in Great Britain. The sense of relationship is strong and growing, and we are all very glad of it. But much as he may feel at home in Great Britain, much as we may do to make him feel so, the citizen of the United States can never be at home there, in the same sense in which a Canadian or Australian can. The great historic sites to which he makes his pilgrimage, the monuments of art and antiquity, the accumulated treasures of centuries of civilised existence, great as may be the attraction they possess for him, are yet not his, as they are yours and mine. And, of course, he cannot take his part in the public life of the country without abandoning his own nationality. The Canadian can do so at any time and for just as long as he likes without any such sacrifice.

These privileges of British citizenship are without parallel in history. I cannot dwell at greater length upon all that is involved in them, either in the way of material benefit, or in their effect on character, though I feel strongly that the multiplied sympathies and the wider outlook which the citizenship of a world-state gives, have an educating influence of the highest value. And, here, if I may, without appearing to be egotistical, refer to my own case, I should just say that I am conscious how greatly my own life has been enriched by my experiences in Egypt and South Africa, arduous and even painful as they sometimes have been. I am not now thinking of the political or business aspect of these experiences, but simply of the education, which it was to me, to be brought into close

touch with the life of these two countries, so extraordinarily dissimilar and yet both so interesting. That was an experience which I could never have had in the same degree as a mere foreign visitor. And I feel the same about my present sojourn in Canada. It is much too short, but I am getting more out of it, in the way of my own improvement, than I should out of a stay of equally brief duration in any foreign country.

Now turn from the individual to look at the community. Despite a general similarity of spirit and aim, which distinguishes the self-governing states of the Empire throughout the world from other nations, there is no doubt great diversity between them. They are developing distinct but closely related types of civilisation and character, and, that being so, they have much to learn from one another which can best be learned and perhaps can only be learned if they draw closer together instead of drifting into separation, and that inevitable consequence of separation, potential antagonism. This is a big subject, much more than I can elaborate at the end of a long address. But I may just indicate what is running in my mind. My personal experience of the younger communities of the Empire is limited. But as far as it goes, it confirms what has often been asserted by careful observers. In the freer and less conventional life of these communities men are more readily judged by their essential worth than they are in the Old Country. Social distinctions are of less account. 'A man 's a man for a' that.' In this respect the younger states are in the best sense of the word more democratic. Again, the supreme importance of education is more generally recognised. It is impressive to see the new provinces of the Canadian West, which have only existed as political entities for a few years, equipped with such stately school buildings, already starting Universities, and resolved to start them on no mean scale. Again, it is a commonplace that new departures in social organisation are more readily attempted here or in Australia or New Zealand than in the United Kingdom. There is not

the same excessive caution about making experiments, or the same difficulty in breaking loose from the domination of time-honoured theories and routine. For one who, like myself, is something of a radical, at any rate in the field of economics and social reform, there is much encouragement in all this, as well as much instruction.

But if there is much that the Old Country can learn from Canada, is there not also much that she can give to Canada in return? I speak from a brief experience, and I may be quite wrong, but you will wish me to say frankly what strikes me. The younger states of the Empire have taken all their fundamental institutions from the Old Country. I am not sure that they have yet reproduced all that is best in her public life. Without ignoring the excesses of party spirit in the United Kingdom, which I am the last to defend, I think that as a rule the tone of public controversy there is comparatively high. The number of men who engage in public affairs, contrary to their own interests and even inclinations, from a sheer sense of duty, is considerable. The civil service, impartially recruited, entirely free from party bias, absolutely independent and yet self-effacing, is probably the best in the world.

Now turn from the political to the intellectual life of the country. I think the general level of education and intelligence is higher on this continent. But I also think that on the topmost plane of literature and learning, of course with individual exceptions, there is something in the maturity of thought and perfection of scholarship which distinguish the Old Country and the Old World generally, which seems entitled to peculiar respect. But I will say no more on these points. On the whole, it would be better for Canadians to look out for what is best and most worthy of imitation in the Old Country, and for me to spend my time in Canada in looking out for what is best and most worthy of imitation here. That would appear to be the right division of labour in the present case.

And now, before sitting down, I want to answer two

criticisms, not external but internal criticisms. I mean doubts which have arisen in my mind as to the appropriateness of what I have been saying to-day. The first is this : for the past fortnight, during which I have travelled thousands of miles and conversed earnestly with scores of able people, I have been ceaselessly in contact with, hearing all day and dreaming all night, and imbibing, so to speak, through the pores of the skin, the story of that immense development, present and future, of Western Canada, which necessarily preoccupies the minds of all its inhabitants to-day. The only thing which everybody cares for, so says my internal critic, is the one thing I have said nothing at all about. But not because I am not impressed with it, or fail to realise its importance alike to this country and to the future of the Empire. If the plains, which I have just been traversing, are going to become the principal granary of the United Kingdom, and I don't see how they can fail to become that, this is evidently a new factor of tremendous moment. But then it would be carrying coals to Newcastle to dilate upon it here. There is not a man in this room who does not know much more about it than I do. If I am going to dwell on the great future of the Canadian West and all that it involves, let me do so, not in Winnipeg, but in London.

But now that I have silenced one internal critic, up jumps another and a more formidable one. 'What,' he says to me, 'have we not heard enough of all these fine generalities about Empire and Imperial Union ? Is it not time to come to something more definite and practical ? ' Now that objection appeals to me very much, for, absurd as it may seem to say so at the end of this interminable rigmarole, I am not a man of speech, but a man of action. No amount of practice will ever make speaking anything but pain and grief to me, and especially speaking in generalities. It is very much easier to discuss a particular definite proposal. But then, in the first place, this is a club for the formation of opinion and not for the discussion of programmes. And I must reluctantly admit that

there is still a great deal to do, quite as much, or more, in the Old Country as here, in creating a sound attitude of mind on Imperial Unity. It is not that in a vague and after-dinner-speech sort of way there is not great enthusiasm with regard to it. But of the people who share that enthusiasm, very few take the trouble to think out what they themselves can do to turn it to a practical account. Men are waiting for a sign, for some great scheme of an Imperial constitution, which, as it seems to me, can only result from, and not precede, the practice of co-operation in the numerous matters in which it might be practised now without new institutions. And so opportunities are missed every day, which would not be missed, if there was a more general and vivid sense of what is incumbent on those who sincerely aim at being citizens of Greater Britain.

I have tried in my imperfect way to live up to that ideal all my life, and have found it a constant source of strength and inspiration. I do not think I have been a worse Englishman because I have never been a Little Englander, but have sought to realise, beyond my duty to England, the duties and obligations of a wider patriotism. May I put it to you, quite bluntly, it is only if a similar spirit prevails in all parts of the Empire, that the great heritage of our common citizenship and our world-wide dominion can either be preserved, or so developed as to yield all the benefits which it is capable of yielding to every one of its inheritors. It is no use a few of us, even a large number of us, working away for the common cause on the other side of the Atlantic, unless others are working for it over here, working for it as Canadians, keeping it in their minds from day to day, watching for every opportunity which may further it, on their guard against every step which may imperil it. It is only by a long pull and a strong pull and a pull altogether, that we can place our great common heritage, the British Empire, above the danger of external attack or internal disruption.

## THE CANADIAN CLUB, TORONTO.—OCTOBER 27, 1908

*Practical Suggestions*

IT is perhaps rather unfortunate that the subject of my address to-night should be a political subject. Even the most ardent lovers of political discussion must, I fancy, be feeling some satiety on the day after the close of a hotly contested general election. But if my subject is political, it is at any rate not party-political. It has nothing to do with any of the questions which at present form the staple of party controversy in this country. My views may excite, indeed they are bound to excite, differences of opinion, but they will not follow the ordinary lines of party cleavage.

Only one more preliminary remark. I have not come to Canada as a lecturer or a propagandist. The object of my journey is simply to make myself better acquainted with Canada, with the conditions of its life and the opinions of its people. And from that point of view my visit has been an unmitigated success. It is difficult for me to tell you how much instruction I have derived from it. Whether it would not have been better to allow me thus to improve my mind, without at the same time compelling me to exhibit its emptiness by making speeches, is another question. Whatever may be the advantages, and the charms, of the rôle of a silent observer, it is one which the vigilance and the enterprise of the Canadian Clubs have rendered impossible in my case. They are scattered all over the land, and, like the robber barons, whose castles lined the great mediæval trade-routes, they insist on taking their toll of the passing traveller. True, I have succeeded in evading several of them. But where evasion is clearly hopeless, I do my best to pay up cheerfully, and to look as if I liked it. But I beg you to observe that this payment is not in the nature of a voluntary contribution. I am not volunteering my opinions. I am told to 'stand and deliver' them. That being the case, I am bound to deliver them frankly. No other course would be compatible with self-respect or

respect for you. But if, being pronounced opinions, they knock up against the pet prejudices of some, or disturb the contented inertia of others, I shall decline to be responsible for the ' moral and intellectual damages ' so occasioned.

And now, not to detain you too long, may I take one or two things for granted ? In the first place, it may seem very conceited of me, but I will take it for granted that my audience to-night are acquainted, in a general way, with the spirit in which I approach the question of the relations of Canada with the Mother Country, and with the other parts of the British Empire. And I will take it for granted further—this is perhaps a bolder assumption, but I am prepared to make it—that, broadly speaking, this spirit is in harmony with the spirit and temper of the great majority of those in Canada who think much or earnestly about this question. I may be quite wrong, but that is my present impression. I think there is a widespread, a preponderant, I do not say a universal, desire among the people of this country, not only to maintain the union which at present happily exists between Canada and the other self-governing states under the British Crown, but to see that union grow closer, to foster more intimate commercial and social intercourse, a better mutual understanding, and greater mutual helpfulness. Underlying that desire is the conception, not clearly grasped perhaps, but constantly becoming stronger and more definite, the conception of the Empire as an organic whole, consisting, no doubt, of nations completely independent in their local affairs, and possessing distinct individualities, but having certain great objects and ideals in common, and capable, by virtue of these, of developing a common policy and a common life.

Well now, that being a general desire, the question arises how to realise it. And here opinions diverge widely. My own view is that, if people already friendly and related wish to become more friendly and more closely related, to develop greater intimacy and interdependence, the only way for them to achieve this is to do things together ;

great things, if possible, in any case things that are of some moment, and are worth doing. To do this, that, and the other important piece of business together, not to stand talking of your mutual affection and sympathy—that is the method, as it seems to me. And there are many opportunities for co-operation between the members of the Imperial family, some that have been taken, many more that have been and are being missed. It is quite a mistake to suppose that nothing can be done. An enormous amount can be done even with our present instruments. And if the instruments are imperfect, it is in using them that we shall invent better ones. Some people think that no progress can be made without the creation, as a first step, of some Imperial parliament or council representative of all parts of the Empire. I do not agree with them. But do not misunderstand me. I am and always have been a Federalist. Personally, I am unable to conceive the effective permanent all-round co-operation of the self-governing states of the Empire without a common organ, an executive belonging to all of them, in the constitution of which they will all have a share, which will be responsible for the defence of their common interests, and armed with power to defend them effectually. And for my own part I do not think the difficulties besetting the creation of such a body are anything like as great as they appear to many people.

But, in my view, this is the natural end of a particular process of constitutional development. It is not the beginning of it. It may come more or less quickly. Or the true solution may be found in some other form of organisation, which, on the basis of our present knowledge and experience, I personally am unable to conceive. What is certain is that we can only arrive at an ideal system of co-operation by actually beginning to co-operate in the problems immediately before us.

Do not let us allow differences of opinion as to the future constitution of the Empire—I do not deprecate the discussion of such matters; in fact, I welcome it, only I

don't want it entirely to absorb us—I say, do not let such differences prevent our working together to-day, wherever we can work together, for purposes which we all, or the great majority of us, consider desirable. To sum up, while we keep the ideal in view, let us pay immediate attention to the one practical thing after another that arises and that can be dealt with here and now.

Now, there is one respect in which I think most people are agreed, that a great deal can be done to draw together the different parts of the Empire, and that is the development of trade relations between them. But this is a subject on which, great as its importance is, I will not dwell to-night. I shall have other opportunities of discussing it. Another great branch of the subject is co-operation for defence. In approaching that I wish to remove one common source of misunderstanding. The way in which the case is sometimes put is an appeal, or something like an appeal, on the part of the United Kingdom, to Canada, or Australia, or New Zealand, to lighten the vast burden resting on the Mother Country. Personally, I am not in accord with that manner of approaching the question, for many reasons. I think there is something in the argument that the United Kingdom, certainly as long as it retained Indian and other dependencies, would require at least as large an Army and Navy as it has to-day, even if the self-governing states were wholly separate, and the United Kingdom was under no obligation to protect them. Moreover I think that, even under present conditions, their membership of the Empire adds more to its collective strength than liability for their protection adds to its responsibilities. But no doubt the general position would be much stronger if all the self-governing states were to adopt the course which Australia seems disposed to adopt, of creating a national militia and laying the foundations of a fleet. And I for one should welcome such a policy, wherever adopted, not as affording relief to the United Kingdom, but as adding to the strength and dignity

of the Empire as a whole, to its influence in peace as well as to its security in case of war.

It is not a question of shifting burdens, but of developing fresh centres of strength. For this reason I have never been a great advocate of contributions from the self-governing states to the Army and Navy of the United Kingdom, though as evidences of a sense of the solidarity of the Empire such contributions are welcome and valuable, pending the substitution of something better. But I am sure that the form which Imperial co-operation in this field will ultimately take, and ought to take, the form at once most consistent with the dignity of the individual states, and most conducive to their collective strength and organic union, is the development of their several defensive resources, in material and in manhood. I know that it may be argued — it has been argued — that individual strength would make for separation. But I have no sympathy whatever with that point of view On the contrary, I believe that in proportion as the self-governing dominions grow in power, they will feel a stronger desire to share in the responsibilities and the glory of Empire.

But quite apart from any danger to the Imperial spirit in the several states, which I do not fear, there are no doubt many difficulties about the creation of separate defensive forces, and there is a danger of their developing on lines so dissimilar as to hamper conjoint action should it become necessary This is especially true in the case of the Navy. The professional and technical, not to say the strategic, arguments for a single big navy of the Empire are enormously strong, so strong that they might conceivably overcome, as they have to some extent overcome in the past, the political objection. But without wishing to be dogmatic on a subject which requires a great deal more careful study on all hands than it has yet received, I must say that, speaking as an Imperialist, I feel the political objection very strongly.

If the self-governing states were going, under our present constitutional arrangements, merely to contribute to a

central navy, whether in money or, better still, in men and ships, I do not think they would take that interest and pride in the matter which it is essential they should take. They would continue, as now, absorbed in their local affairs, and, even if they felt their obligation to the Empire as a whole, they would rest content to have discharged it by such a contribution. The contribution, under these circumstances, would probably not be large, but that is not really the weakest point in such a system. Its fatal weakness is that the participation of the self-governing states in Imperial affairs would begin and end with the contribution. The responsibility for the whole direction of Imperial affairs, for policy, would still rest with the United Kingdom alone. That might save trouble for the moment, but it would be a very poor substitute for a real Imperial partnership. I know the latter cannot be achieved all at once, but I want to proceed on lines which lead towards it, and which do not lead away from it. The true line of progress is for the younger nations to be brought face to face themselves, however gradually and however piecemeal, with the problem of the defence of the Empire, to undertake a bit of it, so to speak, for themselves, always provided that whatever they do, be it much or little, is done for the Empire as a whole, not for themselves only, and is part of a general system.

I may illustrate my idea by the analogy of a firm in which different partners, with shares perhaps of very different amounts, take charge in different centres, but always of the interests of the firm, not merely of their individual interests. I can see in my mind an arrangement, in the first instance, possibly, a number of separate and special arrangements, by which the self-governing states would supplement, with their own forces, acting under their own control, but on a mutually agreed plan, the efforts already immense, but not even thus quite adequate, which the United Kingdom makes to cause the influence of the Empire to be felt in every portion of the world. You know what the presence of a British ship

of war means in any waters. For once that they have to fire a shot, our sailors render a hundred invaluable and little-recognised services to the Empire, and to civilisation, in time of peace. But they cannot be in all places where their presence is desirable. Without firing a shot a gunboat in the Southern Pacific may prevent the recrudescence of slavery, or in the North Pacific act as a salutary warning to poachers. Imperial interests would be as well served, in either case, by an Australian or a Canadian as by an English gunboat.

I hope I have said enough—time will not allow me to say more—about the spirit in which, the object with which, I desire to see the self-governing states develop for themselves that fighting strength which has once already, at a moment of great emergency, contributed so greatly to the safety of the Empire. Let me say one word as to method. It is of the highest importance, not only for strategical reasons, but as a contribution to Imperial unity, that these forces, without being forced into one rigid mould, should yet be trained, armed, officered on similar lines, so that, in the details of military and naval organisation as in policy, these separate efforts may dovetail into one another. From this point of view I think Mr. Haldane's idea of a general staff of the Empire is an idea of great value. The soldiers and sailors of different parts of the Empire will be under the control of their several governments, and those governments must arrange for the manner and degree of their co-operation. But they will all be the servants of the one Empire and of its common sovereign, and they cannot know too much of one another.

We need not wait, indeed we ought not to wait, for a war to make them better acquainted. The same object can be attained by a systematic interchange of services in time of peace. It would be of immense value for any British officer to serve for a time in a Canadian or Australian force. It would be of no less advantage to the Canadian or Australian to put in a period of service in another part of the Empire than his own. At a further stage of

the development, the principle of interchange might be extended from individuals to whole regiments and to ships.

And this idea of interchange of service can be and ought to be applied in many other directions than that of Imperial defence. It is not only the military and naval service of the Empire which would benefit by it, but the civil service as well. The civil service of the self-governing states has been largely fashioned, as their political institutions have almost wholly been, on the model of the Mother Country. No doubt that is less true of Canada than of some of the sister states. But in Canada also there is a tendency, and a very wholesome tendency, to adopt at least the main features of the system, which a long and dearly bought experience has led us to adopt in the United Kingdom. But if we are all going forward on the same lines, why do so in water-tight compartments? Why not have a common standard, at any rate in the higher grades of the civil service? The men who possessed that qualification would then be available for administrative work in any part of the Empire, and the government of any one state would have the best ability and experience of the other countries to draw upon as well as that of their own.

I do not see why administrative ability should not flow freely between one part of the Empire and another, as professional ability already does. We have a Canadian professor at Oxford and several Canadian lecturers. That is an excellent beginning in one direction. But I think it would be of at least equal importance to have Canadian attachés at several British embassies which I could name, and Canadian administrators in some of our Indian districts. Again, in any tariff-making commission that might be appointed in the United Kingdom, the experience of men from any of the British countries, which already have widespread tariffs, would be invaluable. And on the other hand, there are probably men in some of the departments of the civil service at home who would be useful

for your purposes here in Canada. Permanent transfers might be the exception rather than the rule, but temporary transfers could with great mutual advantage become quite common. They would be of the greatest benefit to the individuals concerned, and would tend to keep up a high standard all round, and to militate against routine and stagnation.

Now these are only a few instances. I could go on for hours giving other illustrations of what I mean by doing things together. They are all in harmony with that which is the root idea of Imperialists, namely, to develop the common life of the Empire. The basis is, of course, our existing common citizenship, the fact of our all being, to use a technical term, British subjects. Yet we are still far, very far, from doing all that we could do to reap the benefits which our common citizenship offers, or even to show a proper respect for it. Citizenship of the Empire is an immense privilege. Yet how careless and haphazard is the manner in which it is at present conferred! There is no uniform system of naturalisation in the different states. Each deals with the matter without regard to the others, and what is the result? Every man naturalised in the United Kingdom, where the period of residence required is long, is a British subject in every part of the Empire. But a man naturalised in Canada, Australia, South Africa or New Zealand, where the periods are shorter but different one from another, is only a British subject in the particular country in which he is naturalised. This is the beginning of chaos. There ought to be the same conditions precedent of naturalisation in every part of the Empire, and they ought not to be too easy. But once admitted to the privileges of British citizenship, a man should enjoy them to the full in every country under the common flag.

But the point I am mainly insisting on is, the opportunities of individual development and mutual helpfulness which our common citizenship affords. Are we doing all we can to increase these opportunities? I believe we

are doing more than formerly, but still not enough. We are only beginning to realise, and that not fully, the importance of directing the stream of immigration, and of capital, from one part of the Empire to another, rather than to foreign countries. And yet every tie, commercial, social, educational or political, which causes men to pass and repass from one part of the Empire to another, is of real importance in welding us together, and making us realise the meaning and value of the common citizenship. *Multi pertransibunt et augebitur scientia.* Yes, and not only will knowledge be increased, but patriotism—the wider patriotism of the whole Empire.

And again, people cannot all travel, but they can all read. How little do people in any part of the Empire read of the doings of their fellow-citizens in other parts? Yet they have time to read abundance of trash of all sorts. I believe there are many who would gladly read better stuff if they had the opportunity. Is it too much to hope that now that we have cheaper rates for mailed matter, especially if we can also get cheaper telegraphic rates, there may be a vast improvement in this respect? Assuredly there is the greatest need for it. It rests largely with the enterprise of the Press, and I hope they will rise to the height of their great opportunity.

And now I have done. If I have only touched, hurriedly, imperfectly, incoherently, on a few aspects of a vast subject, of which my own mind is full, I hope I have at least appeared to you to be grappling with a real problem, and not engaged in phrasemaking. People often say to me, 'We wish you would give us a short address—just twenty minutes or half an hour—about the Empire. It must be quite easy for you.' As a matter of fact, there is nothing that I find more difficult. I am so intensely conscious of all that the Empire stands for in the world, of all that it means in the great march of human progress, I am so anxious to give full and yet unexaggerated expression to my sense of the high privilege of British citizenship. But there is nothing so odious as cant, and this is a subject on which

it is particularly easy to seem to be canting. Not that I am afraid of falling into a strain of boastfulness. The last thing which the thought of the Empire inspires in me is a desire to boast—to wave a flag, or to shout 'Rule Britannia.' When I think of it, I am much more inclined to go into a corner by myself and pray. But, even thus, the road is full of pitfalls. One misplaced word, the wrong turn of a phrase, may make the sincere expression of life-long conviction sound like mere empty verbiage and rodomontade. Moreover, I am keenly alive to the amount of positive mischief which may be done by a few careless expressions. But there are some among my audience who, having given years of service to the cause of the Empire, must often have felt the same difficulty. I can leave it to them, living as they do here amongst you, to interpret and supplement my imperfect utterance. And I know I shall have all their sympathy when I say that, if it is sometimes wearisome and distasteful to have to talk about the Empire, there is nothing so bracing, so inspiriting, as to try to live for it.

## THE CANADIAN CLUB, OTTAWA.—OCTOBER 31, 1908

### *South African Development*

THIS is not the first time since coming to Canada that I have had to appeal to the indulgence of my audience, on the ground that long journeys and a vigorous course of sight-seeing are not at all compatible with the adequate preparation of addresses worthy of such gatherings as that which I see before me to-night. In the present instance, I have indeed had no time for preparation, but the subject is one with which I have had so intimate and so recent an acquaintance that I may perhaps be able to say something sensible and interesting about it, though without any attempt at elaboration. The subject about which I propose to speak to you, therefore, is South Africa. But do not be alarmed at the prospect. South Africa has been,

and to some extent still is, a topic which excites bitter political controversy. Let me say at the outset that I shall not refer to any question of a political or controversial nature. Putting politics entirely aside, the problems of South Africa are extremely interesting, and, in some respects, very similar to yours here in Canada. There are also, no doubt, many and great differences, to some of which I shall presently allude. But I think that a comparison of the conditions of the various younger countries of the Empire is always full of interest and of instruction. And if I read aright the spirit which animates the Canadian Clubs, I think that information about other parts of the Empire is always welcomed by them, and that it all helps to that education in the wider citizenship which it is one of their chief objects to promote.

To begin with, one of the points of similarity which strikes one at once between Canada and South Africa is the problem of distance. The vastness of both countries, the great stretches of hardly-inhabited territory which separate the principal centres of settlement, are among the main difficulties which have stood in the way of unification both here and there. Hence it comes that the question of communication, of transportation, looms so large in the history of the development of either country. South African prosperity, the connection between different parts of South Africa, which will very shortly result in a confederation such as yours, would have been absolutely impossible without the enterprise of the people who first pushed forward the great lines of transcontinental communication. The first line of rails which connected the end of Lake Superior with the Pacific Ocean, is in its importance to the history of this country paralleled almost exactly by the importance to the history of South Africa of the great enterprise which pushed a little local line of 56 miles—as it was thirty or forty years ago—first some 700 miles to Kimberley, then, in another direction, some thousand or more miles to Johannesburg, and finally beyond Kimberley something like 1700 miles to the

Zambesi, and which has since pushed it 500 miles beyond the Zambesi into the very heart of Africa. It is impossible to overestimate the part which a vigorous policy of railway construction has played and is playing in South Africa, not only in respect of the material development of the country, but in making its political unification possible. Indeed the iron road, which is indispensable to the effective settlement of every new country of extended area, is of more vital importance in South Africa than anywhere else. More important even than in Canada. For Canada, at any rate in its eastern portion, is fortunate in the possession of great lakes and a great navigable river. It is almost everywhere rich in waterways. South Africa, on the other hand, is peculiarly deficient in inland waterways. It is the railway or nothing —nothing but the mule-cart or the ox-wagon. It is impossible to overestimate the change, the transformation, which is wrought in all the conditions of South African life by the advent of the railroad. Those portions of the country which, like the far north-west of Cape Colony, are still devoid of the only effective means of communication, continue to present that character of arrested development, the sparsity of population, the backwardness, and the isolation, which till recently kept almost the whole of this country so cut off from the general progress of the world.

And now the question arises, and it is one to which everybody interested in South Africa is looking for an answer, what are the possibilities of development within the country which has been so recently knitted up? Many people have asked me during my present journey, 'How does South Africa compare with Canada in respect of opportunities, of the chances which it offers to settlement and immigration?' This is, of course, a question which it is impossible to answer, but there are several aspects of it on which it is easy to throw a certain amount of light. Speaking generally, the resources of the two countries at the present time present the greatest imaginable contrast. Canada, though she is by no means deficient in mineral

wealth, is still pre-eminently an agricultural country. Her main contribution to the markets of the world and the main cause of her recent enormous development—the main cause, though not the only one—is her great and growing agricultural wealth, the extent of which is a discovery of comparatively recent times.

In the case of South Africa, the position is exactly reversed. The agricultural products of South Africa are comparatively inconsiderable; her economic strength lies in her enormous mineral wealth. Now, I do not think the extent of that mineral wealth is yet by any means fully realised. Figures appear in the newspapers constantly, but it needs a pretty close attention to these figures to grasp their full import. Taking gold alone, and taking the gold mines of the Transvaal alone, I have within my own experience of South Africa seen their output grow from less than £12,000,000 sterling a year to something like £24,000,000. That has been the progress in twelve years, despite the great interruption caused by the war. And I have no doubt whatever—I remember being laughed at when I said this five or six years ago—that the production will very soon amount to £30,000,000 sterling a year, or $150,000,000—£30,000,000 a year taken out of the ground along a narrow reef fifty miles in length.

Now, these are enormous figures. It requires some imagination to realise them. And observe that I am speaking only of the gold production of a single small district—the Witwatersrand. As yet, though, as you may imagine, hundreds of men are constantly engaged in looking for fresh outcrops, though hardly a month passes without rumours of some new discovery—as yet, no payable extension of the Rand reefs has been found; nor has anything at all like them been found in other parts of the Transvaal or of South Africa. But it will be many years yet before the gold-bearing reefs of the Rand, which are of sure and unquestionable productiveness, can be exhausted. I will not attempt to say how many. That is a question which is hotly debated, and about which

there is the greatest difference of opinion among experts. My own belief is that, especially in view of the constant reduction of the cost of working, which tends to bring the poorer portions of the reefs within the range of profitable exploitation, it may well be fifty years before the Witwatersrand is worked out. It may seem fantastic to contemplate an average production of twenty or thirty millions of gold a year for half a century, but personally I think it not only possible, but probable.

These, however, are guesses about the future. To return to the facts of the present. Next to the Witwatersrand, with twenty to thirty million sterling of gold a year, you have the diamond mines of Kimberley producing diamonds to as large an amount as the world can afford to take. The difficulty there is to keep down production in order to prevent prices falling away. In the diamond mines of Kimberley you have an annual production of between £4,000,000 and £5,000,000, to which there seems to be no end for many years to come. And during the last few years another diamond mine, the 'Premier,' has been opened up near Pretoria in the Transvaal, which is probably of even greater extent (though the stones may not be of quite the same quality) than the mines at Kimberley. In addition to all this you have gold-mining in Rhodesia steadily increasing, and at present amounting to between £2,000,000 and £3,000,000 a year. And it will be strange indeed if this is the end of all things as far as the mineral wealth of South Africa is concerned. In any case you have this enormous wealth assured for the next fifty or perhaps a hundred years. And as I say, it would be a strange thing indeed, and contrary to all human probability, if other sources of wealth of a similar kind were not discovered long before these are exhausted.

But I have always maintained that the true policy of South African development is to assume that this immense wealth, which is certain, is the end of all things there; that is, in the way of precious metals. I hold that it is wise to assume that there is nothing more to come, and

to devote ourselves betimes to the development of other resources upon which the country can live when these minerals are exhausted. That is, to my mind, the sum and substance of wisdom so far as the economic future of South Africa is concerned. The revenue of the country depends practically, at present, upon its mineral production; the mineral wealth keeps the country going. But it is not enough that it should merely keep the country going. By means of this mineral wealth other resources must be built up on which the country may live when the precious metals have been dug out of the ground. This will be more and more recognised as the true policy of South African development. The question is, what other resources are there?

Let me say at once that there is nothing, and there never can be anything, at all equal, from the point of view of agricultural wealth, to your Western prairie. I have no doubt about that. There is nothing of that size and continuous quality. There are splendid patches of agricultural land, but not so enormous, not so continuous, not so sure. Still, there is a great variety of resources at present quite untouched. For instance, the wealth of South Africa in coal is only just beginning to be tapped, and her wealth in iron, which in some parts of the country, especially in the Transvaal, is very great, is so far quite untouched.

Having regard not only to the quantity of coal and iron, but to their juxtaposition, the closeness in which these deposits lie to one another, there is, I believe, no reasonable doubt that the time must come, sooner or later, when the production of iron and of all the articles into the composition of which steel and iron enter, will play a very important part, and that it may very well be the case that the centre of South Africa will be the greatest industrial region of the southern hemisphere. It is impossible to speak positively on this subject, but it is a matter which in estimating the chances of the future cannot be left out of the account, and one which those who have the control

of the affairs of the country would do well to keep constantly in view. Of course, it stands to reason that so long as a very limited European population has this vast quantity of precious metals to exploit, they will pay a lesser degree of attention to other products which may be permanently of even greater benefit to the country, but the exploitation of which gives less immediate profit. Therefore, the development of minerals, other than the precious metals, is a matter which will come gradually, and which may not attract so much attention until the working of the precious metals shows some signs of coming to an end. And so coal and iron, especially iron, are for the present comparatively neglected.

But, if the mineral resources of South Africa, other than the precious metals, are of problematical development, something substantial can certainly be done, and something is being done, to increase the productivity of the soil. And people are beginning to discover that if in this respect South Africa can never hope to rival the most favoured countries, she is nevertheless capable of far more than people once gave her credit for. The old idea of South Africa was that though the rich coast strip might yield the most valuable products of a sub-tropical climate, that strip was not very large and not very healthy, and that the healthy high veld, which constitutes the bulk of South Africa, was incapable of being more than a moderately good sheep-farming or ranching country. And a great deal of the veld can undoubtedly never be anything else than a pastoral country. Large tracts of it, mainly in Cape Colony, can only support sheep, and other large tracts have so far never supported anything but horses and cattle. But since this matter has been taken systematically in hand people have begun to discover, in the first place, that land which used to be considered only valuable as pasture will really bear rich crops, especially mealies; and again, that a great deal of country which it was thought could only bear crops with irrigation can, under more scientific treatment, bear crops of value

even without this artificial assistance. These discoveries, together with the great improvement which is being effected in the quality of flocks and herds by the introduction of better breeds, and by the successful war waged on the greatest curse of South Africa, epidemic disease among animals, are opening a new prospect to the South African farmer. If only the other great scourge to which he is exposed, the plague of locusts, can be tackled with equal success, the future will be a bright one. And there is every hope of such improvement.

One of the most important features in South Africa to-day is the development of her agricultural resources by the means of science. That is of special interest to Canadians for two reasons. One is that this development is a good deal similar to what has happened in your own West, in this respect, that in the West to-day millions of acres are being cultivated with the greatest profit, which were despaired of even by good judges of agriculture ten or twenty years ago. The supposed difficulty and supposed impossibility have turned out to be a delusion. Precisely the same thing is happening, though on nothing like the same scale, in South Africa to-day, and land is being profitably used which in time past was looked upon as hopeless. And there is another point which will be of interest to you. This development, which has begun within the last few years, is largely due to the fact that, directly after the war, we started in the two new colonies, the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony, very active agricultural departments. The Government took the matter up as it never had been taken up before. Up to that time the principle of South African government was very much the same as that which at one time dominated the minds of people in Great Britain, namely, that the development of the resources of a country was not a thing which concerned the Government, but that all the Government had to do was to keep order, to see fair play between man and man, perhaps to remove any barriers which might stand in the way of trade and industry, and to trust to the enterprise

and energy of individuals to do the rest. As a matter of fact, that system has rarely answered. I do not think it is a perfect theory for an old country; it never answered in a new one. Now, in South Africa, the first thing which the Government did after the war, and which was carried on side by side with repairing the damage of the war, was to try to start the country, in every respect, but especially in respect of agricultural development, on a higher plane than that on which the commencement of the war found it.

We looked round the world to find the men who might be competent to run a thoroughly scientific and energetic agricultural department in both the new colonies. And we found them in different parts of the world, but we found some of the best of them on this continent, and especially in Canada. And not only did some of the men come from Canada, but I think all the men who came, in any leading and responsible position, had made a special study of the agricultural development which has been so characteristic of the United States and of Canada. For that teaching of scientific agriculture which is going, I believe, to effect the transformation of a large part of South Africa, a complete transformation of its economic condition, we looked to the experience and the lessons of scientific agriculture in this country. And I am glad to think that, despite all the differences which divide South Africans to-day, and despite the contrast which in some respects undoubtedly exists between the present régime and the régime which preceded it, the agricultural departments of the new colonies have struck root to such an extent, and the good work that they have already achieved has received such an amount of recognition, that, whatever may happen to other things, this is a piece of solid progress which nothing is going to undo.

Now, one word in conclusion, on a wholly different subject. I have purposely avoided all political references, but there is one political question, not of a controversial nature, which naturally excites so much interest to-day, that I

wish very briefly to refer to it. I allude to the great subject which is being considered at Durban during these very days—the federation or, as some prefer to put it, the unification of South Africa. Call it what you will, the problem is to create one central legislature and government for all South Africa, with or without subordinate provincial governments and legislatures. The result of the conference at Durban will, I have not the least doubt, be the closer union of South Africa. The exact form of that union I would rather not attempt to forecast. But there is this great difference between the problem of the union of the South African states and the problem which confronted the statesmen of Canada before Confederation, that there is nothing really separating the states of South Africa to-day except artificial boundaries. I do not mean to say that there are not deep divisions among the people of South Africa. There are deep divisions, and only time can overcome them and draw the two great European races together into one nation, and perhaps a long time may be required. But these divisions exist inside every one of the states, not absolutely in the same proportion, but in very much the same proportion. It is not a case, for instance, of bringing together a British community and a Dutch community; it is a question of uniting a number of communities in all of which these same elements exist. Therefore, so far as the question of race is concerned, great as are the difficulties which it presents, it does not present any special difficulties to union, because, whatever problems may arise from the coexistence of nations of different languages and ideas in one body-politic, these problems already exist in each of the separate states, and they are not going to be increased, but rather diminished, or, at any rate, modified, by uniting those separate states into one state. The obstacles to union are of another character, and perhaps the greatest of them is, that one of the states is so much wealthier and more prosperous, at the time being, than the rest, that there may be people within that state who do not wish to share their

prosperity with the rest of South Africa ; and, on the other hand, there may be people in the other states who are afraid of coming into the partnership with such an overwhelming neighbour. I do not, however, believe that this or any other difficulty will prevent the union from being accomplished. The majority of people in all the states, of people of both races, are too much alive to its necessity. And they all have a great common difficulty to face—I am speaking of the white people—in the fact that, though they are the absolute masters of the country, the ruling race, they are still only a minority, and a small minority, in the midst of a much more numerous coloured population. The whites number a million and a quarter, there or thereabouts. But the coloured population, mostly pure blacks, are four or five times as numerous. And that is a situation which is full of difficulty, and which constitutes no doubt the most serious of all the problems which lie before South Africa. The precise nature of the difficulty is, indeed, often misunderstood. There is no question, at least not in my opinion, of the black population ever becoming a danger to the political supremacy, to the government of the whites. There may be occasional rebellions. I doubt whether they will be frequent or very serious. In any case I am sure the white races will be more than able to cope with them. The real danger, if I may so express myself, is not a military, but a social one. It lies in the influence which contact with a less civilised race, in fact, the mere presence of a less civilised race, may have upon the European population itself. One consequence of the fact that the coloured people are the majority, the subject majority, and that they constitute what you might call the working class, is that work, manual labour such as it is no discredit for a man to perform in any European country, no discredit, but the contrary, comes to be regarded as beneath the dignity of a white man in South Africa. He will not do what he considers a black man's work. If he is obliged to do it, he feels himself degraded by it. This tends to indolence,

to an unhealthy contempt for many kinds of work, which are in themselves honourable, on the part of the whites. It tends to the degradation of those of them who are, after all, compelled to do work of that kind, and so to the creation of that socially undesirable stratum which is known, in the southern states for instance, by the name of 'mean whites.'

Time does not allow me to dwell at greater length on this difficult and complex subject. I only wanted to point out that the Native Question, which naturally exercises the minds of all men in South Africa, is a question rather different in its character from what it is commonly supposed to be by the outside world. But, whatever its difficulties, it will no doubt be easier to deal with in a united South Africa, than under three or four different and conflicting systems in the different states. For this, as for every other reason, those who have the welfare of South Africa at heart—and we must all desire the welfare of that great and important part of our common Empire—cannot but feel an earnest wish that the present effort to bring about South African union may be crowned with success.

## BOARD OF TRADE, MONTREAL.—November 1, 1908

### *Preferential Trade*

Speaking at Toronto the other day, I expressed the belief that the policy of Tariff Reform was at no distant date going to prevail in the United Kingdom. Prophecies are cheap, and that is, of course, only a personal opinion. Still it is one which I hold very strongly. And it is quite certain that, if Tariff Reform does come, it will come to stay. Parties may very probably still be divided with reference to the range of the tariff or the height of particular duties. But no party is likely to propose a simple return to our existing system, any more than at the present time any party in Canada advocates the complete reversal of the so-called National Policy originated by Sir John Macdonald.

But assuming the United Kingdom to adopt a tariff similar in its general character to that of other great industrial and commercial nations—similar to that of Germany, for instance, though no doubt with a much lower average rate of duties, especially on foodstuffs—a great change will come over the whole aspect of the Imperial problem. For it will then be possible to reciprocate the preference at present given by Canada and other dominions to the Mother Country, and the prospect of a great development of trade within the Empire will seem much nearer than it does to-day.

Now, to my mind, what is known as Preferential Trade between different parts of the Empire has always appeared one of the happiest and most fertile ideas ever introduced into the sphere of national economics. To treat the Empire as an economic whole without any internal barriers is not a practical proposition. On the other hand, it is both bad business and bad politics that the different communities within the Empire should deal with one another in any respect as if they were foreign countries. The policy of Preference is a working compromise. And it is a principle of wide application affecting a great deal else besides import duties. If the United Kingdom were to remain, as I for one feel convinced it will not remain, a country of unrestricted free imports, I should still adhere to the principle of preference. I should still, for instance, desire to see the stream of emigration and of capital directed from the United Kingdom to other parts of the British Empire rather than to foreign countries, though without a change in the British tariff, and consequently without the possibility of substantial mutual concessions in respect of Customs duties, it would be much more difficult so to direct it.

Even at the risk of wearying you, I should like to make this point of view perfectly clear. The principle of Preference, and the reasons for it, I should define as follows: in the interests of the Empire as a whole we are bound to desire the greatest development, in economic as in other

respects, of every part of it. It follows that every part, which like any of the self-governing dominions is a distinct and independent economic unit, must be free, as indeed they all are free, to shape its fiscal policy according to its own special requirements, with a view to the fullest development of its own wealth and productive power. The same, of course, applies to the United Kingdom itself. But subject to that, it is desirable to encourage the maximum of intercourse, including, of course, commercial intercourse, between the different states, and to foster trade within the Empire to the greatest possible extent. Nothing could contribute more to that result than the general adoption of the rule, that, other things being equal, or very nearly equal, the people of any state in the Empire should obtain what they need to obtain outside their own borders, from other portions of the Empire, rather than from foreign countries; that wherever they reasonably can, they should give their custom to their own kith and kin rather than to foreigners. Mutual concessions in respect of tariffs must exercise a powerful influence in that direction; they must tend to lead trade into channels within the Empire rather than into channels outside it; not to divert it from its natural course, but to keep it in one course rather than another where both are natural. They constitute a permanent factor of immense importance, just turning the scale in innumerable cases in favour of one source of supply as against a competing source of supply; in favour of a British as against a non-British source.

I maintain that if any group of nations, situated as the great self-governing dominions of the Empire are relatively to one another, were to adopt such a policy of mutual concessions, they would be the gainers by it. It would tend to give stability to trade, it would tend to give their several exports a position of vantage and security in certain great markets, and would mitigate the risks and uncertainties of unrestricted international competition.

So much from the economic point of view pure and

simple. But the case for reciprocal concessions between different parts of the Empire is, of course, immensely strengthened when we consider also their political effect. By buying its wheat, as far as possible, from Canada rather than from Argentina, the United Kingdom will be helping to build up the prosperity of the Dominion. By buying china and earthenware, or glassware or cutlery from the United Kingdom rather than from Germany or Belgium, Canada is helping to give employment to British instead of foreign hands. By obtaining her sugar from the West Indies instead of the continent of Europe, Canada is making all the difference to the economic prospects of the West Indies. Needless to argue that development and employment in any part of the Empire is more important to us than an equivalent amount of development or employment in some foreign country.

Stated in broad and general terms, that is our case. I should like to illustrate it more particularly by what has happened already as a consequence of the preference given to the United Kingdom by Canada, and what would be likely to happen if that preference were reciprocated.

Now, as regards the benefit which the trade of the United Kingdom has derived from the existing Canadian preference, there really is no room for dispute. Every now and then some ill-informed free importer still ventures to belittle that benefit. But in a close examination of the trade statistics in detail it is impossible for any fair-minded man to resist the conclusion that, as a very competent observer put it to me the other day, 'Preference has kept Great Britain from losing such trade with Canada as she has still got.' On this point I might quote the words of Mr. Bain, formerly Deputy Commissioner of Canadian Customs, which are contained in an appendix to a most valuable report on the *Conditions and Prospects of British Trade in Canada*, published as a Blue-book in London this year. Mr. Bain says (p. 108):—

'Dealing now with the preferential tariff, I venture to assert in the strongest way that, if such preference had not been

granted, British trade with Canada would be on a very small basis to-day.'

Again he says :

'The preference undoubtedly accomplished the purpose for which it was intended, and it not only arrested the decline in British trade, but gave it a very healthy impetus.'

I believe that these are conclusions based on evidence, and evidence so strong that no fair-minded and well-informed free importer can refuse to accept it. The present Chancellor of the Exchequer,[1] as you know, has accepted it. While arguing that to adopt reciprocity would cost the United Kingdom too dear, he admitted in the freest and most generous terms the advantage to the United Kingdom of the Canadian preference. And the same is true of the preference given by other Dominions. I think you may take it that on this point controversy is practically over, and that the benefit derived by the United Kingdom from existing preferences, if nothing occurs at this juncture to impair that benefit, is going to be one of the most powerful weapons in the hands of Tariff Reformers, and will contribute materially to the victory which I anticipate.

That victory would, I hold, be of immense importance, not only to the United Kingdom, but also to Canada. I am not sure that the bearing of it on your own development is fully realised. People in this country certainly seem to be in favour, and strongly in favour, of the United Kingdom granting a preference in return for the Canadian preference ; but I think they are in favour of it as a matter of sentiment, as a matter of principle, and not so much from any belief in the importance of its practical effects. And I can well understand that to the farmer of the West, for instance, in the first rush of his new prosperity, to the man who finds the crop of a single year replacing or almost replacing all that he has spent upon his land, the advantage of two or three cents a bushel against an unseen competitor in a distant market may appear a matter of very

[1] Mr. Lloyd George.

small account. He probably does not give it a thought —not at present. But things will not always be as they are at present. The West as a whole, indeed agricultural Canada as a whole, is bound to develop and grow immensely in wealth and prosperity; but individual profits will not show as large as they do now, though even now they only do so over a special and limited area. Mixed farming will gradually take the place of specialised wheat-farming over a large part at least of the Western prairie. And even specialised wheat-farming where it may still prevail will require more capital than it did at the outset. Moreover, Canada is not the only country which is making prodigious strides in agricultural development. Her food products, whether vegetable or animal, whether the wheat and oats of the Western prairie or the cheese and butter of the province of Quebec, in so far as they are not consumed at home, will have to compete in external markets, and above all in the great British market, with similar products from many parts of the world, and especially from the Argentine. In the keenness of that competition a very small permanent advantage will have a very great effect. Two or three cents a bushel may seem a small matter. They are not a small matter when multiplied by two hundred millions.

Moreover, this is a question of development. All the new countries want capital. There is not enough spare capital in the world to go round. In the competition for what there is, which is the fiercest competition of all, an advantage will lie with the countries which appear to be more profitable as fields for investment, because, other things being equal, their products are in a position to compete on specially favourable terms in some of the most important markets. And that consideration will tell with peculiar force in Great Britain, where, if the principle of Preference were to be endorsed by the nation, a great impetus would be given to the sentimental as well as the material influences making for the investment of British capital in other parts of the Empire rather than in foreign countries.

And in this general Canadian development all classes will share. It is not merely a question for the farmer. The transportation agencies, the manufacturers, are equally concerned. Indeed, the position of the Canadian manufacturers—I do not, of course, expect them to admit this —seems a peculiarly favourable one. They have got a protected home market, which gives every promise of vast expansion. Whatever Canadians require, which Canadian manufacturers can produce at anything like equal cost with other people, Canadian manufacturers will supply.

But at the same time, as I hope and believe, under Preference British manufacturers will get the lion's share of the rest, in so far as they can supply it. I lay great stress on that qualification. People are often perturbed by the great growth of trade between Canada and the United States. I do not think it is necessarily injurious to trade between Canada and the United Kingdom. There are a vast number of articles which Canada draws from the United States, which she could not by any possibility draw from Great Britain. The trade of this country with the United States will grow, and ought to grow, but its growth need not involve any injury—quite the reverse—either to Canadian or British industries. The bulk of the importations into Canada from the United States does not hurt them at all, though I do not, of course, deny that there are some classes of goods imported into Canada from the United States, which I should prefer to see imported from the United Kingdom.

I say I think the position of the Canadian manufacturers is a very strong one. But I should like, certainly with great fear and trembling, and quite foreseeing that I may bring an avalanche on my unlucky head, to utter one word of warning.

There is a growing feeling in favour of Free Trade in many parts of the country. I do not think it will prevail. I do not think that, either in the interests of Canada or of the Empire, it is desirable that it should prevail. But

I believe the movement would become very formidable if the bow of Protection were strung too tightly, and indeed if it were not, as time and circumstances demand, to be somewhat relaxed. From the point of view of the manufacturers themselves it would be a mistake to be too aggressive. As long as they retain a position of substantial vantage in the home market, they have no interest, but the reverse, in diminishing the prosperity of their own customers, as excessive duties do diminish it. And as regards the position between Canadian and British manufacturers let me say just this : a good deal of harm was done at one time by the idea that the policy of Preference aimed at an artificial division of industries between Canada and the United Kingdom, certain kinds of manufactures being, so to speak, appropriated to Canada, and the United Kingdom being left undisturbed in the exercise of others. I do not believe in such an artificial limitation, but I do believe that, with reasonable tariffs and mutual preference, there will be something like a natural adjustment. The policy of Preference is sometimes represented as an exchange of sacrifices. It is nothing of the kind, and the word sacrifice is quite out of place in connection with it. The idea simply is that, while Canada should make for herself everything she can make at a reasonable cost, she should buy what she cannot so make from the rest of the Empire rather than from outside it, provided that the rest of the Empire is capable, again at a reasonable cost, of supplying it. As a matter of fact, if this principle were adopted, there would in practice be something like a division of labour in supplying the Canadian market between Canadian and British manufacturers.

And no doubt friction would occasionally arise, though with good management it ought to arise very seldom. With regard to such cases, to cases for instance where it is urged that the British preference, even though it still leaves a high duty upon the British article, nevertheless tends to prejudice the Canadian producer, and to transfer work from Canadian to English or Scotch hands, all I can

say is, I do not want British preference to harm Canada in any way whatsoever, but I want the matter considered, from the point of view of Canada, of Canadian industry as a whole, and not merely from that of a particular trade. It is all a question of degree, of what is a reasonable amount of protection to the Canadian producer. But it is quite evident that if a particular trade or trades, which have no natural advantages in Canada, can make the Canadian consumer pay much more than their value for their products, he will have so much less to spend on the products of other Canadian industries which may be much more suitable to Canadian conditions. In such a case it is not only to the advantage of the United Kingdom, but to the advantage of Canadian industry as a whole, that the British producer should come in. And there is one thing more to be said about such causes of friction. They will be rare, but we can never expect altogether to avoid them. I think, however, that they will only be dangerous as long as the system of Preference is in its infancy, and especially as long as it is one-sided. At present if any Canadian trade is or thinks itself unfairly affected by the preference given to British goods, there is no one in Canada interested in presenting the case on the other side, and so ensuring that it shall be fairly considered on its merits. But once let the whole body of Canadian exporters be interested in maintaining a preference for Canadian goods in the United Kingdom, once let the whole Canadian community feel the benefits of closer commercial relations with the United Kingdom, and any aggrieved trade will have to make out a real case before it will be able to obtain public sympathy.

And it must not be forgotten that Canadian manufacturers themselves will be directly as well as indirectly interested in the maintenance of a preferential duty by the United Kingdom. One of the features of Tariff Reform will certainly be a tax on imported manufactures. Now, Canadian manufactures already compete to some extent in the markets of the United Kingdom—take agricultural implements, for instance—with similar manufactures

from other countries, and expecially from the United States. Strong and growing Canadian industries will be increasingly engaged in such competition in the British market. I think they will be among the keenest defenders of preference for British goods in the Canadian market against any unreasonable attack.

And now, in conclusion, only two further remarks. I sometimes hear complaints in Canada about the slow progress which the idea of mutual preference seems to make in the United Kingdom, and I hear that slow progress attributed to a want of sympathy, of response, on the part of the Mother Country to the advances made to her by Canada and the other self-governing Dominions, to something like a refusal to grasp their outstretched hands. That impression is natural, extremely natural, but it is nevertheless an erroneous one. To us, who know all the enormous difficulties which the new departure in economic thought had to encounter in Great Britain, progress does not seem slow, but fast. And in any case I am sure that our delay and hesitation is not due to any want of sympathy with the idea of a closer union of the Empire.

At heart the vast majority of people in the Old Country have a very strong feeling of attachment to the young countries of the Empire, a very strong desire that the bonds between all the members of the Imperial family may be maintained and strengthened. The bulk of the British people are Unionists at heart—Unionists, I mean, not in any party sense, but in the sense of desiring to keep the Empire together. No doubt there is a section of which this is not true, a section who really are Little Englanders, Cosmopolitans and Separatists. And no doubt also the operation of the party system often gives to this, as to other minorities, a much greater influence than they are entitled to either by their numbers or their character. But it is quite certain that the attitude of this section is entirely out of accord with the general national sentiment. And if there is delay in accepting either the idea of mutual preference, or any other proposal which aims at promoting

Imperial unity, it is due to doubts as to the efficacy of the particular scheme to attain its object, and not to any want of sympathy with the object itself.

And, lastly, let me say this: No man is a stronger advocate of Preference than I am, but do not let me be supposed to hold that Preference alone, even in its widest application, is going to solve the whole problem of Imperial unity. Trade relations are important, very important, and very far-reaching, but they are not everything. Neither do I know that closer trade relations, immense as their value would be in keeping us together, will necessarily lead to the growth of common political institutions or of a common policy.

The reason for putting up a big fight for Preference is that it is something making in the right direction (something in itself desirable on economic grounds, and desirable in its ulterior effects on wider grounds) which is immediately practical. It is something which can be accomplished now. The great danger of the whole Imperial movement is that it may lose itself in aspirations. And in some ways that danger is greatest with the very people who are the keenest Imperialists. They have a great and splendid ideal—I entirely sympathise with it—of an out-and-out federation, and they are apt to think that unless we have got that, nothing at all can be done. My own feeling is that so far from there being nothing to be done, hardly a day passes on which something might not be done, some impulse given in a right direction, some check given to movement in a wrong one. I am all for the big ideal, but am quite equally convinced of the necessity of tackling practical problems as they in fact arise, provided we tackle them in the right spirit. Preference is a real live issue, which affects vast numbers of people and interests everybody. It is a real live question, and therefore it is worth all our efforts to bring it to a satisfactory conclusion, not only for its own sake, but for the sake of the moral, for the sake of the demonstration that we are not unpractical visionaries, but that the spirit which

animates us, while it may find its full satisfaction only in some future and as yet distant achievement, is capable of accomplishing here and now results which are of great immediate value to all the communities within the Empire.

## WOMEN'S CANADIAN CLUB, MONTREAL

NOVEMBER 2, 1908

*Imperialism and Social Reform*

ALTHOUGH I do not propose to preach a sermon, I am going to begin with a text. And with characteristic modesty I am going to take that text from one of my own old speeches. I have said the same thing a dozen different times in different words, at different places, but this is how I seem to have said it at Rugby, on November 19, 1907: 'The greatest danger that I foresee is that the ideals of national strength and Imperial consolidation on the one hand, and of domestic reform and social progress on the other, should become dissevered, and that people should come to regard as antagonistic objects which are essentially related and complementary to one another.'[1]

I believe in national greatness and power, but I hope I take a fairly comprehensive view of what constitutes them. It is not only armies and navies, though these have their functions to perform; it is not merely guns and ships, though these also are necessary; it is not merely a well-filled treasury and good credit; it is not merely high policy, though according as that is wise, prudent and far-seeing, or short-sighted, spasmodic and impulsive, the value of fleets and armies and reserve funds may be greatly heightened or diminished. I say ultimately greatness and power rest on the welfare and contentedness of the mass of the people. And this involves so much: the physical health of men and women with all that is necessary to insure it; air, space, cleanliness, exercise, good houses, good food, and all that is generally included in domestic economy. Physical health first as the basis; then, of

[1] See pp. 249-50.

course, trained intelligence, the power of thought and observation, quickness of hand and eye, the development of various forms of industrial skill, and so forth.

I might go on all day recounting the multitude of things which make for the welfare and contentedness of a people, from physical health onwards, through education, to the highest planes of morality and religion, things which were never better summed up than in the old prayer-book phrase of 'health, wealth, and godliness.' But my special point is that all this involves an immense amount of social organisation. In our complex modern society there is room, no doubt all the room and the need in the world, for individual enterprise and initiative. But there is no room for a policy of *laissez-faire*, of 'go-as-you-please and the devil take the hindmost,' unless you are prepared to have such a mass of 'hindmosts,' such a number of failures as will drag down the whole community to a lower level. In the keen rivalry of nations, in the constant competition between them, from which none can escape (I am not thinking of war; wars might for ever cease, but there would still be competition in peace), one of the things which is going to count most is waste, waste of human power through bad social and industrial arrangements. There is a great silent force always working on the side of those nations which waste least in that respect.

One other point. I have spoken of well-being and contentedness. You cannot have contentedness, as distinguished from mere sluggish acquiescence, without a certain measure of well-being. More than that, you cannot have patriotism. Not that I mean to say for a moment that patriotism is the exclusive possession of the well-to-do. One often finds the strongest sentiments of patriotism in members of what is commonly known as the working class, and there is good reason for that too. I think in some respects the dignity of citizenship, pride in being a member of a great nation, is a more valued possession to the man in a humble station than it is to the great and wealthy, who have so much else to enjoy and be proud of. But

there is a limit to this. Patriotism, like all the ideal sides of life, can be choked, must be choked, in the squalor and degradation of the slums of our great cities, or by exceptionally hard and cruel conditions of life anywhere.

'No shade for those that sicken
In the furnace fire of life,

No hope of more or better
This side the hungry grave,
Till death release the debtor,
Eternal sleep the slave.'

Where conditions exist which cause feelings such as these to take possession of great numbers of the people—and I fear such conditions do exist frequently in many of our large centres of population—you cannot expect to find patriotism. You cannot expect a casual labourer in an English town, for instance, working for fifteen or twenty shillings a week, and having a wife and family to support, and no certainty that he will get even that fifteen or twenty shillings from week to week, I say you cannot expect that man to set much store by being a citizen of a great Empire, or even to care about a vote, except for what he may get out of it for himself or his class. I need not dwell further upon this. I hope I have made my point clear. It is that one of the essentials of national greatness is good social organisation, and that patriotism and Imperialism (Imperialism, which is simply the highest development of patriotism in the free peoples of a world-wide state) must look inwards to the foundations of society, to prevent disease at the roots, as well as outwards, to ward off external danger and attack.

And here is where the influence of women especially comes in. I do not mean to say that I underestimate their influence in any branch of national policy. On the contrary, it may be of quite peculiar value all round, were it only in this respect—that it is less likely to be deflected from the right line in any great national and Imperial issue by party considerations than is the opinion of the average

man. No doubt women, too, are often partisans, bitter partisans, but they are not brigaded, platooned, as men are, in party divisions. They are not exposed to the same temptation or to the same pressure as men often are, to subordinate public, national, Imperial interests, to the interests or supposed interests of a party organisation. I say, Heaven forbid that we should try to circumscribe the influence of women in public life. And very fortunately, even if we wished to, we could not do it. Their influence is, in fact, all-pervading. But their actual work will necessarily lie mainly in the sphere of internal and social development. What I want them to realise is that in doing that work well they are rendering national and Imperial service as much as any soldier or sailor or diplomatist.

I have been told that one of the foremost of living Englishwomen recently addressed this club, and that all that she talked about was the provision of playgrounds and other means of recreation for the children of the poor in London and other great centres of population in the United Kingdom. I think she was perfectly right. What does one of our greatest modern writers and artists in words say about this? In simple and childlike language, no doubt, for he was only writing *A Child's Garden of Verses*, but yet with deep underlying truth, he says :—

> 'Happy hearts and happy faces,
> Happy play in grassy places,
> This is how in ancient ages
> Children grew to kings and sages.'

I do not know that there is any greater Imperial service that could be rendered than if we were to provide, as we do not provide, but as we might provide, ample space and means of healthy recreation for even the poorest children in our great cities.

Now, this is a problem, one of a group of problems, which are no doubt less urgent and which come home less to you in a vast thinly-peopled country like Canada than they do to us in the crowded, thickly-populated countries

of Western Europe. But I am not sure that the peculiar difficulties of a crowded town life are not going to be reproduced on this side of the Atlantic, only with added irony, because there is so much room. I do not know how many of those present have read a book called *The Jungle*. It gives a terrible picture, an exaggerated picture, no doubt, but still, I fear, not one wholly devoid of truth, of very undesirable social conditions in one of the great cities of the United States. I do not think there is anything like that in Canada. Far from it. But I do think that the people in many of the new towns which are growing so fast, especially in the Canadian West, hardly realise how rapidly slums, and the other evil features of a crowded town life, do spring up, unless careful provision is made beforehand to avert them—provision so easy to make in the first instance, if people would only be sufficiently far-sighted, so hard to make afterwards, when all the surrounding open space has been taken up and has attained a prohibitive value. Then, when it is too late, people are sure to regret that in the first instance they did not reserve sufficient elbow-room for a large population and a sufficiently ample public domain. But if men are too much absorbed in their business or in political questions of more immediate interest, but by no means of equal ultimate importance, to think of such things, surely the women might look after them.

Now please observe that this is merely a single illustration of a neglected public interest. I want women to come to the rescue, especially on the neglected sides of public life. I do not believe in a division of interests—I mean, to confine women to one class of questions and men to another. I do not believe in a division of interests of that kind, but I do believe in a division of labour. We cannot afford to dispense with the aid of women in the great work of social organisation, if only because there are not men enough to go round.

I often hear of there being too many people in a particular trade or a particular profession, but I have never yet heard

of a plethora of men available for the innumerable kinds of public and social work which require doing. The fields are ripe for the harvest, but where are the labourers? We cannot, I say, afford to dispense with the aid which women are willing and able to give. Some people maintain that when one talks like this one is encouraging women to neglect their domestic duties, that one is taking them out of their proper sphere, and so forth. No sane person would encourage women to go into public work to the neglect of their domestic duties. But there are many of them who have time to spare, who have special gifts for social work, and who are very anxious to undertake it. I say it would be madness to repress them, especially when there is so much work which goes undone. We have begun to learn this lesson, at least in the Old Country.

In the United Kingdom to-day the assistance of women is welcomed, and they are doing an increasingly important work in many directions. As inspectors in factories, as members of boards of guardians, and indeed as members of all bodies which are concerned with local government, and especially with regard to the management of schools, they are taking a more and more prominent position, and the community is immensely the better for it. Everything that pertains to education, to housing, to hospitals, to the life of women and children employed in mines and factories and shops, to the care of those who have fallen in the race of life, whether they have fallen for good—the numbers of whom, in a new country like this, should be comparatively small—or whether they have only fallen temporarily, and can by timely and sensible help be set on their feet again—all these are spheres of work in which the co-operation of women is peculiarly valuable.

I might greatly extend this catalogue, but I am not here concerned to give a catalogue of women's opportunities, but rather to bring home to you the national aspect, so to speak, of them all.

I have spoken of the work done by women in the Old Country, because it is what I have myself seen and know.

I cannot speak with equal experience of what is being done by them in Canada. But of this I am firmly convinced, that what is known throughout the Empire as ' the women's movement ' can only gain, and may gain immensely, from an exchange of experiences, from the women of one part of the Empire following the efforts, and learning from the successes or the failures, of women in other parts. That is one of the chief advantages of the unity of the Empire, of what I have spoken of as our common citizenship. We have got to evolve between us all a higher type of civilisation. People do, in fact, learn more easily from those of their own household. We do, in fact, learn more easily from the efforts and experiments of men and women in other parts of our own Empire, than from what is done or attempted in foreign lands. Social experiments in the other dominions of the Crown produce an effect in Great Britain which is not produced as readily by similar experiments, say in the United States or in Germany. There is a special instance which occurs to me at this moment, namely, that in the attempt to deal with the evil of sweating in England, we have derived peculiar instruction from what has been attempted with a similar object in Australia. And there is a very great deal that we can learn with regard to social organisation generally from other parts of the Empire also. Nor need the Old Country be ashamed in so doing. She is in a good position to repay in other respects the debt which she owes to the younger countries. It is by mutual knowledge, by mutual help, by learning from one another, that we shall preserve in some and develop in others the vivifying and inspiring sense of being, despite many differences of origin and tradition, one people with a great common mission in the world.

## THE CANADIAN CLUB, MONTREAL

November 3, 1908

*Conditions of Closer Union*

This is the last opportunity I shall have, at any rate for some time, of addressing a Canadian audience. That being the case, I may, perhaps, without appearing too egotistical, be permitted to say a few words about my personal experiences during this my first journey on the American Continent. I shall be sailing from Quebec the day after to-morrow, just seven weeks from the time when I landed there. In the interval I have visited every province of the Dominion except the Maritime Provinces. That is an unfortunate though inevitable omission which I hope some day to repair. But it is comparatively easy for a traveller from the Old Country to see something of the Maritime Provinces in a four or five weeks' trip. In this instance, having a greater continuous amount of time to spare than I am often likely to have, I thought it best to make sure of seeing the more distant parts of Canada, and so after spending a few days at Quebec, I traversed the whole country to the shores of the Pacific, and have now spent as much time as remained to me in visiting the principal cities of what used to be known as Upper and Lower Canada.

Of course, I am quite aware that hard as I have worked to see all that could be seen in the time at my disposal, there is a vast deal more that I have missed. The knowledge I have acquired of Canada is necessarily very limited and superficial. There are many places which I longed to visit, but could not visit; and there is no place which I have visited where I did not feel the need of more time. Still, with all its shortcomings, this has been a most instructive as well as a most delightful journey. It is always pleasurable and interesting to see a country for the first time. But the pleasure and the interest are greatly enhanced when, as was my case in this instance, one knows

something about it from previous study. And then I have enjoyed another great advantage. Wherever I have gone I have had friends to take me by the hand and ensure my seeing not merely the outside of things, but being brought into some real contact with the life and interests of my various places of sojourn. In this respect I have been most fortunate everywhere, but nowhere more fortunate than here in Montreal.

The drawback of my journey, if it has had any drawback—I do not like to complain where I have so much more to be grateful for—is that I have been asked to make so many speeches, and that frequently I could not, without discourtesy, refuse to comply. I own that I am rather appalled to think how many words I have spoken in public, often with most inadequate preparation, during the last six weeks. People are too apt to think that because a man has spent many years in public life he is necessarily a ready speaker. But this is a great mistake. There are two kinds of public servants. There are those whose primary business is to mould and to guide public opinion. They are necessarily always speaking, and may reasonably be expected to attain considerable fluency. But there is another class, whose business is to perform certain definite pieces of public work. Their duty is in the office rather than on the platform; or it may take them, as administrators or diplomatists, to distant parts of the earth. For men of this class the rule holds good that 'if speech is silver, silence is gold.' They are apt to find that their business is better done the less they talk about it in public. Now, for nine-tenths of my public career I have belonged to the latter category, and I must be forgiven if I am not much of an adept at speaking.

But, since on this occasion I am perforce among the orators, what is it that I have been attempting to do? Most of my speeches have dealt—this was what was asked and expected of me—with various aspects of what, for want of a better word, is called Imperialism. In what spirit have I approached that theme? My object has

certainly not been to lecture the people of Canada or to try to convert them to any particular doctrine. It has been a much more modest one, namely, to explain my own point of view. I am not asking people to agree with it, but I do want them to understand it. And I am not sure that even now, after all that has been said and written on the subject, people do understand the point of view of what I may call an out-and-out Imperialist. Let me, therefore, try once more, very briefly and directly, to sum it up.

My point of view is that of a citizen of the Empire, of one who, no doubt, recognises a special duty to that portion of it in which he happens to reside—in my case England—as, for the matter of that, he has a special duty to his own parish and his own county—but whose highest allegiance is not to England, or to the United Kingdom, but to the great whole, which embraces all the dominions of the Crown. That is his country. He does not regard himself as a foreigner in any part of it, however distant, however different from the part in which he habitually resides. He would consider it to be a great loss and a great wrong —yes, something altogether wrong and unnatural—if events occurred which compelled him so to regard himself. It is part of his birthright to be a citizen, to be at home, in every quarter of the Empire. Speaking as an Englishman, if in treading on Canadian soil I had to admit that I was treading on foreign soil, I should feel that I had been deprived of an inestimable privilege. And I should feel precisely the same, if, being a Canadian, I found myself a foreigner in any part of the British Empire. For this world-wide state, this Empire, belongs just as much to every born Canadian, Australian, New Zealander, South African, as it does to any Englishman, Irishman, or Scotsman. This is, I hold, the only right view of the mutual relations of the self-governing states of the Empire, of which the United Kingdom itself is one. They are equal sharers in a common heritage. That is true Imperialism.

I know there are difficulties about grasping this doctrine.

Let us, therefore, try to see just what it means, and also what it does not mean. I want to strip this great idea of all disguising, all deforming misconceptions.

We who believe in the unity of the Empire, who desire to see it become a more perfect unity, who are in favour of every measure and every tendency which makes in that direction, are constantly being admonished of the difficulties and the danger which might arise from different parts of the Empire 'interfering with one another's affairs or meddling with one another.' But such admonitions indicate an entire misunderstanding of our position. The complete independence of every self-governing state of the Empire in its local affairs is a fundamental principle of Imperialism. Nobody dreams in these days of the British Parliament making laws for Canada or Australia. Such an idea is alien to all thinking men, but it is particularly repulsive to Imperialists, for they would see in it the greatest danger to the very thing which they have so much at heart—unity of action for common purposes.

But there is another misconception which seems more difficult to eradicate, and that is the idea that Imperialism means that the self-governing Dominions, while, no doubt, remaining independent in their respective local affairs, should be grouped as satellites round the United Kingdom, and should, in matters of common interest, all dance to the tune set by some Imperial piper at Westminster. Once more I say no Imperialist either expects or desires to see the Dominions occupying any such subordinate position. His notion is that, just in so far as any of the self-governing Dominions sees its way to sharing in the responsibilities of Empire, it should also share in the direction of Imperial policy. And his ultimate ideal is a union in which the several states, each entirely independent in its separate affairs, should all co-operate for common purposes on the basis of absolute unqualified equality of status.

No doubt the idea of such perfect equality presents difficulties to many minds. They see that, however much you may talk of equality of status, the different states of

the Empire are in actual fact still very unequal in strength and resources. The United Kingdom, in particular, still is, and must for many years longer continue to be, far superior in these respects to any other member of the Imperial family. And therefore they fear that it would, in fact, drag the others after it, possibly into adventures and complications in which they would have no interest and from which they greatly desire to be free. And certainly that is the last thing which as an Imperialist I either contemplate or wish. Moreover, it is the last thing which, as a matter of fact, I think at all likely to happen. In my opinion, a common policy, the active participation of the Dominions in the councils of the Empire, would be much more likely to keep the United Kingdom out of unnecessary foreign complications than to involve the other states in such complications. An united Empire, while enormously strong for purposes of defence, would, as it seems to me, be absolutely averse from, I might almost say incapable of, a policy of adventure.

But while I think that the fears to which I have just alluded are groundless, I admit that they are, under present conditions, with the present great inequality of power between the different states of the Empire, not altogether unnatural. And therefore it is that, in the interests of Imperial unity, though not only for that reason, every Imperialist must long to see the greatest possible increase in the population, the resources, the strength, the internal cohesiveness, the national self-consciousness and self-reliance, of the great Dominions of the Crown other than the United Kingdom. He must desire this, both for their own sakes and as calculated to increase their ability and their willingness to enter into a permanent indissoluble union with the United Kingdom and with one another. For his belief is that, as the self-governing states grow in power, and as their relations with the outside world increase, two consequences will follow. On the one hand, they will become more conscious of the need of mutual support, of the advantage of being, not isolated states, but members

of a world-wide union; and on the other hand, they will be more willing, because they feel themselves more capable, to share in the responsibilities and the glory of Empire. It is on their strength, not on their weakness, on the growing extent and multiplicity of their interests, not on their continuing to live isolated lives in their several corners of the world, that the Imperialist relies for the impulses which will bring about closer union.

That being the case, you will well understand with what sympathy and with what hope I, as an Imperialist, contemplate the present great development, not only of the material resources, but of the national spirit of Canada. There are those who seem to fear that the growth of a Canadian spirit, of Canadian patriotism, will be a danger to the unity of the Empire. I take precisely the opposite view. The last thing I should dream of doing would be to run Imperial patriotism against Canadian. I want to rest the one upon the other.

I have heard it said a good many times of late, not by Englishmen, but by Canadians, that public life in Canada is unattractive because there are no big issues. That seems to me an extraordinary view to take. No big issues! The next half-century will determine the question whether Canada is to remain part of the British Empire. And the decision rests with Canadians. No external compulsion could well be applied, certainly none will be applied, to influence them in it. And their decision may involve the fate of the Empire as a whole. In any case, it must enormously affect its position and influence in the world. Look at the map. Take Canada out of the chain that girdles the globe, and you not only diminish enormously the size of the King's dominions—I do not care so much about mere size—but their continuity and capacity of consolidation. The Empire might remain a great Power without Canada. Indeed, the United Kingdom alone might and would remain a great Power, for greatness is not merely a question of dimensions. England by herself was great in the Middle Ages, great

in the time of Elizabeth, when Scotland was still a separate kingdom and no British Empire existed. And the other portions of the Empire may become great states in isolation if the whole splits up. But it would be ludicrous to compare any of them, whatever its future development, to the undivided whole. That whole is the greatest political entity in the world to-day; properly organised, it must be by far the greatest Power. I am not going to beat the drum or sing pæans in praise of it. But in all soberness and sincerity the British Empire, with all its defects and weaknesses, is yet an influence second to none—nay, more than that, an influence without an equal, on the side of humanity, of civilisation, and of peace. The continuance of that great power for good depends largely on the action of Canada, of the Canadians of this and the next generation. With such a problem confronting them, it is impossible to commiserate the people of this country, least of all those of them who are still young, on the lack of big issues in their political life.

## NOTTINGHAM.—April 19, 1909

### *National Peril and National Service*

[From a speech delivered at a meeting of the Notts Liberal Unionist Association.]

I have not been kept awake by *An Englishman's Home*, much as I agree with what appear to be the opinions of the author. My flesh does not creep at the sight of a German waiter. I have no reason to suppose that Germany is deliberately meditating an attack upon us. But then I don't need any definite shock to make me uneasy. My feeling is not one of habitual security varied by occasional frights. It is one of chronic, but, as I think, reasonable anxiety. I cannot tell at what time, I do not know in what quarter, grave danger may arise to the Empire. I doubt whether any man can. All that I know is that, if we continue year after year, and decade after decade, to run such tremendous risks, to undertake such heavy

obligations express or moral, without knowing how we shall discharge them, to conduct so vast a business with such an inadequate insurance, we are bound, sooner or later, to come to grief. I thought the Boer War had taught us that, but the Boer War is apparently forgotten. Some improvements have resulted from it, no doubt, notably in the training of our Regular Army, though the numbers of that Army, as you will remember, have been materially reduced. But in the main we are going on on the old lines, as if we had had no warning that we were living on the edge of a precipice. And what makes that state of things more bitter is the conviction that it is totally unnecessary. Humanly speaking, it should be possible for us to enjoy a position of great security, and one in which scares like the present would be wholly unreasonable. The potential strength of this Empire is immense, but so also is its unreadiness and lack of organisation. And no mere expenditure of money will put things right. More expenditure of money may indeed be necessary, but there may also be great waste of money from want of system. And nothing can be done in a hurry. What we need is carefully to think out our requirements as a whole, and then to set about year after year working up to the accepted standard.

If that were to be the result of the present scare, we should have reason to congratulate ourselves on its occurrence. But so far it is difficult to see many signs of a comprehensive grasp of the situation on the part of our rulers. I fully realise the embarrassment of a Government which has to keep on apologising to its supporters for having any armaments at all. And I readily admit that the Ministry contains men who are thoroughly serious about maintaining our present predominance at sea, and that these men, for the time being at any rate, have got the upper hand. Undoubtedly the prospects of our keeping up an adequate Navy are brighter for all that has recently happened. And that is a great deal to the good, provided that we do not concentrate our attention upon one particular item because it happens to be fashionable,

to have 'caught on,' to the neglect of other considerations. We want our fleet as a whole to be the best in the world, not only in material and men, but in respect of the strategy and forethought applied to the disposition and the use of it. But there is something more than that. You must not only look at the Navy as a whole but at National Defence as a whole. National Defence is not merely a question of fleets, though to a country like ours, an island country with great over-sea possessions and a great foreign trade, its fleet must always be of primary importance. It is not only a question of Sea Power. It may very well be in some degree a question of Air Power. It always must be, to a great extent, a question of Land Power. All these things have to be considered together. You may build battleship after battleship, you may go piling Pelion upon Ossa in the way of naval expenditure, but you will never have a satisfactory or a well-balanced system of defence until behind your small Professional Army—the whole of which may be wanted thousands of miles away, and need to be reinforced when there, as was the case in the South African War—you have a force capable of taking charge of these islands, and of sending help, if necessary, to the men at the front. In other words, you must make your Territorial Army a reality, something like equal, in respect of numbers and training, to the work which it may at any time be called upon to perform. And I for my part have never concealed my conviction that you will not achieve that result on what is known as the voluntary system. If it is really the duty of every able-bodied man of military age to take his share in the defence of his country, as we keep on asseverating, why should he not be called upon to discharge it like any other recognised civic duty? Those who are prepared to leave the constitution of an adequate Second Line army to chance, cannot really believe in its necessity. One argument, and to my mind it is the only formidable argument, which is brought against those who like myself advocate National Service, is that it would cost money—

though the amount that it would cost has been grossly exaggerated—and that this money would be better spent upon the Navy. But do those, who use that argument, consider how greatly the efficiency of the Navy itself would be increased by the fact of having a nation behind it, which was capable of self-defence on shore? You may strengthen the Navy by increasing its size, but you may also strengthen it—you may give an increased value to whatever number of ships and sailors you have—by relieving them of part of the work of National Defence, and setting them free to deal more effectively with the rest. No doubt the existence of a powerful Navy is and always will be our greatest safeguard against invasion. But invasion ought to be an unprofitable business in any case. The men of this country, who are not sailors, ought surely to be in a position to give a good account of any invader, and to leave the Navy to strike, wherever it can strike most effectually, without the restrictions which the sense of our defencelessness at home would, under present circumstances, be certain to impose on its mobility. Besides, there are things which the Navy, for all its priority in importance, cannot do. It is on land that the fate of empires is in the last resort decided, and we cannot overlook the possibility of being called upon to make efforts on land, which would require larger numbers than anything short of National Service can give us.

I know that people are getting rather into the habit nowadays of saying that in view of the growth of other nations, of the general increase of armaments, and of the development of a new spirit of restlessness in parts of our own Empire, it will soon be more than we can do to maintain our old position, that the weary Titan is no longer equal to the burden, and so forth. But just think of the vast reserve of power that we possess, if only we choose to use it, in the young manhood of this country—which we alone among great European nations still leave wholly or almost wholly untrained to arms. With all that latent strength not drawn upon, how can it be said, with sincerity,

that we are at the end of our tether? Let us be honest with ourselves. We may be unwilling to make the effort; we may not think the object of national greatness and security worth the trouble of maintaining it; we may hold that it is wicked and un-Christian to keep up, not indeed an army, but an adequate one. That seems to be the sincere, if somewhat strange, opinion of a good many worthy people. But do not let us say that we are unable to keep up an adequate army, or that we cannot afford it. The money cost in this case is not the chief cost, nor would it, in the sum total of our national expenditure, be a very great item. The chief cost is that of the personal service, which it is the fashion to describe as a sacrifice, but which, kept within reasonable limits, is not a sacrifice but a blessing, especially for a population living in the conditions in which the majority of the British people live to-day. It would supply just that physical toughening and discipline which, combined with an improved system of popular education, is what we most require alike from the point of view of health, of morals, and of industrial efficiency.

But that does not exhaust the list of our undeveloped reserves of strength. What of our fellow-citizens across the seas? The events of the last few weeks have once more brought home to us the great, and in the long run almost incalculable, possibilities which arise from the fact of their devotion to our common heritage and traditions. It would in any case be a misfortune to have to leave them out in any comprehensive scheme of Imperial Defence; it is impossible to leave them out, when they themselves come forward and claim to be included in it. This is not the first time that they have given practical proof of their sense of the solidarity of the Empire. We had very substantial proofs of it during the South African War. But there is this new element in the present case, and it is an element of supreme importance, that this is not merely an impulse to give help in a particular emergency. The dominant idea of the Dominions, if I interpret it aright,

is to prepare themselves to fill a permanent place, and undertake definite responsibilities, in a general scheme. It is an idea which has germinated in their own minds, but they are looking to us for guidance and counsel in carrying it out, and these we are bound to give. It is a great opportunity, but we must not expect too much to come of it at first, or underrate the intricacies of the problem. The question is how to direct the precious spirit of Imperial co-operation into the right channels. And the true principle, I cannot doubt, is to encourage each Dominion to provide in the first place for the defence of its own soil and its own shores, and of all Imperial interests there or thereabouts, by its own native forces. That is the first thing, local self-dependence: after that, and springing out of that, mutual help.

There may appear at first sight to be great waste of power in the multiplication of separate defensive forces. But in the first place, this is inherent in the present constitution of the Empire, and in the next place, it will lead to the maximum of collective strength in the end. Mere contributions from the Dominions to the British Army or Navy, valuable as they are under existing conditions, invaluable as they are as an evidence and expression of Imperial patriotism, will never take us very far. It is a real Imperial Army and Navy, constituted by the combination of the forces of the several self-governing states, forces organised from the outset on a common pattern, and controlled ultimately, as I hope, by a common authority —that is the goal towards which we should continuously strive.

And now I must apologise to you for having dealt thus hastily, superficially if you will, with a subject of such vast importance and complexity. I cannot tax your patience by any fuller treatment of it to-night, even if I had the presumption, which I have not, to speak dogmatically on the matter. We are only at the beginning, as I hope and believe, of a new and great chapter of Imperial development. But let me point out to you, in conclusion,

how intimately it is connected with the question which occupies so great a space in our local politics to-day. The root idea of the great movement initiated, to his eternal honour, by Mr. Chamberlain, the movement for Fiscal Reform, is to strengthen the foundations of the British Empire. A great State needs great resources. These resources depend ultimately upon productive power, upon industry. To maintain and develop the industry of the peoples of the Empire, whether in these islands or in distant parts of the earth, to make them mutually inter-dependent and collectively self-supporting, to use British muscle, British brains, British capital to build up the several British states and dependencies, rather than foreign countries—that is the ideal of the Tariff Reformer. He does not neglect or undervalue foreign trade, but he wants it to supplement home-trade and inter-Imperial trade, and not to oust it. There is absolutely the same fundamental principle in his policy, whether you look at it in its application to the United Kingdom, or to the rest of the Empire. Let me just glance at both these sides of the case. Some of the opponents of Fiscal Reform have been trying to make capital out of the offers of help which we are now receiving from the over-sea Dominions. 'You see,' they say, 'how loyal they are, and how devoted to the Mother Country. It does not need Preference or any other sordid bond to attach them more closely to us.' But what Tariff Reformer has ever said that he wanted Preference in order to bribe Canada or Australia or New Zealand to be loyal to the Empire? That is a complete and ludicrous misconception of our position. We start from the assumption that any great self-governing community of British race under the British flag is going to be loyal to the Empire. They are bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh, our fellow-citizens, our only sure and constant friends. That is precisely why we want to see them increase in population and resources, why we want our trade, our emigrants, our surplus capital, to go to them rather than to foreign countries. Under the Cobdenite system we

have taken no heed to whom they went. Even now the Cobdenites only jeer at us, when we regret the investment of British capital in foreign rather than in British lands. 'What does it matter,' they say, 'where it is invested? You get the interest all the same, and the capital is just as likely to be spent in buying English goods to whomsoever you lend it.' As a matter of fact that is not the case. But even if it were, it would not meet our objection. Granted that the immediate profit, the immediate trade, is the same in either case, the result is not the same. In one case it is the development of a foreign country, in the other it is the development of part of our own Empire. The latter is an additional source of strength to us, the former is not. Has Argentina offered to build you a battleship?

And precisely the same consideration applies, to come nearer home, in the encouragement of our own British industry. To the Cobdenite trade is just trade. It doesn't matter with whom you trade, as long as you make a profit out of it. It does not matter from whom you get your goods, as long as you get them cheap. And I agree that, if the goods are such as British soil cannot reasonably grow, or British hands produce, we can, as a rule, afford to let a comparison of prices alone decide from whom we buy. But it will need a great deal of cheapness—even if it were sure to last, which, as we know, it is not always—to compensate me for buying from the foreigner what I used to buy from my own countrymen. The foreigner, whom I am supporting, is not going to help to defend my country, or to pay my taxes. His skill and ingenuity and capital are not going to build up Great Britain or the Empire, but some other, and possibly hostile country. Perhaps all this would not matter so much if the whole civilised world were going in for cosmopolitanism, as the Free Traders of the last century expected. But now that it is quite clear that development, in this stage of the world's history, is going to be on national lines, it matters a great deal. And yet, wherever you go in Great Britain, you find instance

after instance in which foreign nations, through their deliberate policy, and our inaction, have captured trade that was formerly ours, and are even supplying us in this country with goods that we once made, and are still perfectly capable of making, ourselves. You know much more than I do about the trade of Nottingham. But if figures are any guide, the industries in which you are so greatly interested in this town have felt, like so many others, the effect of competing with the foreigner on unequal terms. The imports of cotton hosiery into the United Kingdom have increased in the last twenty years from £400,000 to £1,200,000. Germany alone sends us over £1,000,000. During the same period, our exports of cotton hosiery have declined from nearly £1,000,000 to little over £500,000. And if, on the other hand, our exports of woollen hosiery show a substantial increase, that increase is entirely due to the trade with British possessions. These figures are remarkable. The exports of woollen hosiery to foreign countries were £302,000 in 1885. They were only £354,000 in 1907. In the same period the exports to British possessions had risen from £254,000 to £1,132,000. It was during that period, you will remember, that a preference was first given to us in colonial markets. The history of the lace industry is no less instructive. Here there has been a perfectly enormous increase in imports—from little over one million pounds to nearly four. There has also been a large increase of exports. But those Continental countries which pour their lace goods, free of duty, into this country, France to the tune of upwards of two millions, Germany to the tune of a million and a half, put high and prohibitive duties on most kinds of our lace goods when exported to them, with the result that, except in a few lines, their purchases from us are comparatively inconsiderable. And the principal exception is well worth pondering. Germany buys from us large quantities of plain nets, and they are imported free of duty. But why so ? Because they are the raw material of her own industry. They have patterns worked upon them in Germany and

are sold back, in many cases, to ourselves. And this sort of thing is going on in many other directions. It is no use for the Cobdenite to say that nevertheless our trade is increasing. Has not the trade of the countries, which have succeeded in transferring to themselves so much work formerly done by British people, increased in a much greater degree ? They have got their share in the general expansion of the world's business and part of ours besides. And that process will continue until you take the remedy into your own hands.

## BATH.—APRIL 30, 1909

### *Preparation against War*

[At a meeting of the Bath Conservative Association.]

A FEW days ago, when speaking at Nottingham, I ventured to refer to the lessons, or at any rate what appeared to me to be the lessons, to be derived from the spasm of anxiety which has lately passed over the country with regard to our national security. Because I have ventured to preach these doctrines, as I shall always preach them, as long as I can get any one to listen to me, I have been taken to task by some of our friends in the Radical Press as an unregenerate Jingo, a man of war and not of peace, whose reliance is on physical force alone, who does not recognise the moral or even the material influences—the closer intercourse, the commercial, industrial, financial interdependence—which make armed conflicts between civilised nations not only more ruinous and repulsive, but actually more difficult of inception, with every succeeding year. But, strange as it may appear to my critics, I am quite as much alive to these facts as they are. Only I draw from them a somewhat different conclusion. Wars between civilised nations are much rarer than they used to be, and doubtless they are destined to become ever less and less frequent. We can all agree in rejoicing at that. And one reason why they are less frequent is that the great Continental nations are so completely and constantly prepared for them ; that

they literally are 'nations in arms' fully equipped, and the consequences of their collision would be so tremendous that everybody shrinks from it. But if wars are rarer, they are also, when they do occur, much more decisive. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when wars were more frequent, but were also conducted in a more leisurely manner and with less concentrated effort, the vanquished in one particular struggle might look forward to reversing its results a few years later. But the results of our titanic modern struggles may be felt for centuries. The consequences of 1870 are present, very present, with us to-day. And one thing more. Just because wars are so rare and so decisive, because everybody shrinks from them, just for that very reason the fighting capacity of nations, their relative formidableness, counts more than ever—and it always counted a great deal—in the numerous international differences which are settled without an actual recourse to arms. The presumably weaker is less than ever inclined to try conclusions with the presumably stronger, when the consequences of defeat are so irrevocable. And so the strong powers mould the destiny of the world in peace. But from these simple facts some clear conclusions follow. A nation can less than ever run the risk of disaster in war, since it will probably never have the chance of retrieving it. If, on the other hand, it is adequately prepared for war, it will probably never have to fight. But such preparation is not therefore useless, nor is its utility limited merely to averting war: on the contrary, it is to that, and to that almost alone, that any nation owes whatever power it possesses, whether to maintain its own rights or to exercise any influence on the general course of human affairs. The people who talk of guns and ships as being wasted, because they grow obsolete without ever having been employed in battle, are blind to what is going on all around them, and never more visibly than in this year of grace. The time may come, it may not even be so very distant, when the nations will agree to beat their swords into ploughshares. But

a good deal may have happened in the interval. I own that I should like my own country still to be in existence, and to count for something in the world, when that happy day arrives.

There is another class of critics, who do not indeed question the necessity of great armaments, but think that there is a danger of our going beyond our means in that direction. They fear that our resources as a nation will not bear so great a strain. I think we are still very far from the breaking-point in that respect, and even if we were nearer it, I would rather be somewhat impoverished by insurance than totally ruined by conquest. But to some extent I do agree with these critics. It must be evident to all of us that, in view of the vast growth of more than one foreign Power, the time is coming, though it may not come immediately, when the United Kingdom alone will be hard put to it to retain its place among the foremost nations of the world. But what is true of the United Kingdom alone is not true of the Empire. The British Empire as a whole has still the greatest future of any Power on earth. But the condition of that greatness is organisation, the effective combination of its several component states for purposes of mutual defence. That is the biggest problem which confronts the statesmen of every part of the Empire to-day. Upon its solution more depends than on all other political questions put together. It is not only of vital importance to us in these islands, it is of vital importance to each and all of the Dominions. And if that truth is not yet generally recognised, it is fast making its way to recognition. No one can doubt that even now the self-governing communities across the sea are facing seriously, more seriously than ever before, the question of defence, and they are facing it in no merely local but in an Imperial spirit. They realise what the existence of the Empire means to them. They are proud of being members of it. Jealous of their independence, rejecting, and rightly rejecting, any idea of subordination, they are yet willing and anxious to take their share

as partners in the maintenance of the common heritage. It may be only a small beginning, but, wisely directed, it is the beginning of one of the greatest movements in history. On the other hand, lacking direction, it may all fizzle out. A great responsibility rests upon the statesmen of this country. It is their part, not by dictation, but by wise advice, advice which all the Dominions are inviting, to turn these offers of co-operation to the best account. We are told that they are considering the question. Yes. But are they considering it seriously? Do they realise that they will be judged in history by their success or failure to make good use of this opportunity much more than by all their other performances put together? So far their record in such matters has not been a good one. They have done nothing but reject every proposal which has yet been made to them for drawing closer the bonds which unite us to the self-governing states of the Empire. To mutual preference, which every one of these states has urged upon them, they are vehemently opposed. Yet they too profess to be Imperialists after their fashion. Well, then, here is their chance, a splendid chance, and very likely their last, of proving that that profession is something more than verbiage. But, whatever the Government may do or not do, I hope that we Unionists will never again let this question occupy a secondary place in our thoughts and efforts. The safety and greatness of our country are the objects dearest to all our hearts. Can any man doubt any longer, where that safety and greatness must ultimately be sought? They must be sought in the organic unity of the Empire. We can, we will, sustain the burden of defence, not only of our own shores, but of the whole Empire, to the very utmost of our power. And we are very far from having made our last effort or put forth all our strength. But we cannot alter the great physical facts which set a limit to our relative power in the long run. We must recognise that in the far future the British Empire cannot continue to rest upon one central pillar. It will have to rest upon the united

strength of all the self-governing communities under the British flag. And that being the case, if it is our first duty to husband and develop our own resources, so that we may do our share in the common work, we have a second duty like unto it, and that is to foster the growth of those daughter states, which will some day be as great or greater than we, and to keep us all a united family. And we Unionists at least are fortunate in this, that we are not slaves to any doctrine, which prevents our working to that end on lines which commend themselves to all the daughter states. They one and all pursue, in principle, the same fiscal policy. With many differences of detail, they are all convinced of this, that their first duty in fiscal policy, as in all policies, is to themselves, their next to the related states under the common flag. As long as we stand out, that principle is in danger everywhere. If we come in, I believe that we can clinch it all round for ever. Do not imagine that the idea of preferential treatment of the members of the family, of closer relations with them, of marking the difference between them and foreign nations, is limited to import duties, or indeed to trade relations at all. That is simply its first, easiest and most natural expression. But the possibilities of development latent in that principle are innumerable. Even with regard to duties, I do not believe that what the people of Canada or Australia or New Zealand care most about is the mere money aspect of the question. The man who can see no other aspect of the case than that, and who therefore fears that the adoption of Preference all round would lead to nothing but haggling over the amount of it, does not really understand the attitude of our fellow-citizens across the seas in this matter. They would value the commercial advantage certainly. They are keen business people. But what would affect them most would be the practical demonstration that we felt towards them as they feel towards us, our adherence to what I may call the family view of our relations, not the pure hard cash view, in which the parties you trade with or who benefit by your trade

are a matter of complete indifference, and the last farthing decides it absolutely either way. I believe that adoption by this country of the principle of preferential trade in any form would have an immense effect, that it would be in the true sense of the word epoch-making. It is only fair to remember that the daughter states have not attempted to drive any sort of bargain with us. They have given what they gave freely. If they have asked us to do likewise, it has always been with the emphatic declaration that they believed it to be in our own interest, to be good for us as well as for them, good for the Empire all round. They have even said, and said many times, 'Do not do it, if you think you cannot afford it—that it is going to hurt you.' Well, I am here to reiterate for the fiftieth time my conviction that Preference is part of a policy which is not going to hurt us but to save us. What is more, I am convinced that the first step to Imperial Preference on any considerable scale, I mean the adoption of a new form of tariff in this country, is within measurable distance, whether we turn it to account for Imperial purposes or not. The people of this country are not much longer going to look idly on while other nations build up their prosperity at our expense, and deliberately transfer our industries to their shores with the kind assistance of our fiscal system. The change is coming sure enough. I am not the least anxious about that. What I am anxious about is, whether it will come in time to let us get all the good out of it that we ought to get in the direction of Imperial development and consolidation. Let me tell you this, that something has been lost already by delay. You may say to me, 'Why should the Colonies, if, as you say, they have given us preference freely, and not in any merely bargaining spirit, why should they take it away because we do not respond?' Well, I should have thought the constant want of response might chill even the most spontaneous, the most unselfish affection. But there is more to be said about it than that. They may not be able to help themselves. Foreign nations, our rivals, are as wide

awake to the bearings of this question as our own Government is asleep, and they are busy by their tariff legislation, and by their diplomacy trying to prevent the establishment of an all-round system of preferential trade within the British Empire, in order themselves to make arrangements with our Colonies such as we refuse to make. They are doing it by allurements and they are doing it by pressure. It may not be possible for the daughter states, with any reasonable regard for their own interests, to resist those allurements and withstand that pressure, if we look on with folded arms as if we had absolutely no interest in the matter. And remember, in the Colonies too people are not all of one mind. Imperial feeling is strong; at present it is still, as a rule, dominant. But they have their Particularists over there also, just as we have our Little Englanders. There is, too, in some cases, a large and rapidly growing element of their population, who are not bound to the Mother Country and the Empire by those ties of tradition and sentiment which animate the men of British race. You cannot expect it. What answer have the British and the Imperial section to these their fellow-citizens when they say, 'Your first duty after all is to your own country. Consideration for Great Britain is all very well, but if the British people do not respond to it, do not even care about it, why should we not bestow our favours in some quarter where we shall meet with reciprocity, and enter into closer relations with people who do care?' We alone can supply them with an answer, and it is in our power even now to make it an absolutely conclusive one.

## BRISTOL.—MAY 4, 1909

### *Eating up Capital*

[From a speech at a meeting of the Bristol Conservative Association, soon after the introduction of the Budget of 1909.]

I HAVE spent a laborious life, but without accumulating a fortune upon which envious eyes can be cast by any tax-gatherer. I have no personal interest in the matter, but

I have, I hope, some slight sense of justice, and I have had some twenty years' experience of public finance in different parts of the world. And speaking from a purely financial point of view, and leaving justice and such considerations out of the question, I say that the present raid is going to defeat itself. There is a distinct limit to what you can profitably get out of wealth by means of direct taxation; when I say profitably, I mean without reducing those very resources upon which you intend chiefly to rely, upon which the present system of taxation makes it ever more and more necessary for you to rely. There is a distinct and unmistakable limit to the profitable taxation of wealth. We have been dangerously near that limit for a very long time, and with the present Budget we are jumping over it altogether. Do not suppose that, because wealth often cries out before it is hurt, it is therefore impossible to hurt it. These extravagant imposts are going to hurt not only wealthy people but wealth, the basis of your future taxation. That, from the financial point of view, leaving all question of justice aside, is a grave consideration. You are going to damage property by these recurrent fines, and you are not going to give that same property time enough to recover—to grow once more to its former amount before you tax it again; you are going to eat up the source of your own future taxation; you are going to spend as income part of what is really capital, and that is the most familiar characteristic of every rake's progress. Do not let me be told, as we Unionists are constantly told, 'Oh yes, you are saying all this in the interests of the rich. You want to see all the taxation taken off the rich, and the whole burden put upon the poor.' Speaking for myself, I never have advocated and I never will advocate anything of the kind. I am as anxious as any man to see as much got out of the rich towards public expenditure as can be got consistently with reasonable fairness, and, above all, without diminishing realised wealth so as to impair the source of your revenue for the future.

LONDON.—MAY 14, 1909

*The Work of the Industrial Law Committee*

[At a meeting of the Industrial Law Committee held at 20 Arlington Street on the invitation of Lady Salisbury, who presided.]

I AM in the happy position of feeling that, however feeble may be my advocacy of the cause placed before you to-day, it can at this stage of the proceedings do no mischief, because you have already passed the resolution which I came here to support. When I was asked to come here I felt some hesitation about agreeing to address the meeting—not from any want of sympathy with its objects, but because I felt that the advocacy of a cause like this had better be left to those who have personal experience of the work, which I unfortunately have not myself. But it was represented to me that, just because I was an outsider and because my own activity has lain in such very different directions, I might be of some use in calling the attention of the public to what I may call the national aspect of this particular enterprise. It is from that point of view, I may say, that it specially appeals to me, and from that point of view I should like to say a very few words. As regards the work of the Industrial Law Committee, it has been put to you in the most impressive and attractive manner by Miss Deane and Lord Lytton, and on that side of the question I will not add one word. But it has been my lot lately to speak a good deal, perhaps too much, about the question of national strength. I think that we must never forget that there are two sides to that matter. It has an internal as well as an external aspect. National strength and greatness must ultimately have their roots in the health and well-being of the great majority of the people. No one who is acquainted with the life of the mass of the people in our great cities can fail to recognise that the condition of a large number of the poorest and most helpless workers—I am not speaking of the idle or the criminal or the feckless ; there will always be numbers of them, and they will always be wretched—I say the condition of the great body of the poorest workers, who

nevertheless are genuine workers, whose intention and desire is to live honest and decent lives, is in many cases such as not only to constitute a great blot on our civilisation, but to be a source of weakness, an absolute danger to our existence as a nation. Now the laws of this country have recognised this fact. Remember that no amount of charity, no amount of philanthropy, no amount of kindness in helping the broken and the down-trodden, can make up for neglect to deal with the causes, which are constantly leading so many hundreds and thousands to break down. It is to sound legislation and administration, insuring decent and healthy conditions of life to the great mass of the working population ; it is to the prevention of evils such as over-crowding, over-long hours of labour, dangerous machinery, or starvation wages—it is to the prevention of those evils, and not to the mitigation of their consequences, that we must look for any real improvement in the condition of the class of people to whom I am referring, whose misery and degradation not only affects themselves, but breaks down the class immediately above them, and, in fact, is a heavy drag on the whole of our society, right up to the highest class. I say that the law of our country recognises this. I think Miss Deane spoke in terms perhaps rather too depreciatory of the first feeble efforts which were made in the direction of social legislation. However small the beginnings, we have now got in this country, as the result of the efforts of reformers and philanthropists of all classes throughout a century, a great body of industrial law, protecting, acting as a bulwark to, the health, the comfort, the morals and self-respect of the great body of workers in factories and workshops throughout the country. Great Britain has taken the lead in this matter. Other civilised countries have followed in her footsteps. I do not mean to say that in some respects they have not surpassed us, because I regret to say that that is the case. Still, in the main, we may be proud of this great body of industrial law, this immense monument of humane, thorough, far-seeing effort in the sphere of social

reform. And there is one more thing I should like to say about it, and that is that this body of law is not merely a mechanical protection. On the contrary, if steadily enforced, it tends, in the course of a very few years, to produce a habit and an attitude of mind both among employers and employed, which gradually brings up the less progressive and the more backward to the level of the more advanced. And thus there arises a general state of public feeling and public opinion, which in the course of time makes the compulsion of the law less and less necessary. But until that day is reached, we have got to keep up the steady pressure of the law, insuring what I think Miss Deane has well described as certain minimum conditions of decent and healthy existence. Now where, as in the great organised trades, there are powerful unions, they can be trusted to look after for themselves the enforcement of the law which affords so great a protection to their members. And again, where there are wealthy, progressive, and enlightened employers, they themselves are anxious to maintain those conditions for their work-people, and perhaps even better conditions than any that the law enforces—to maintain them themselves and to see them maintained by others. But there are many cases—hundreds, and I fear thousands of cases—where, owing to the fact that the workers are poor, helpless, and unorganised, or to the fact that the employers, who themselves often have a hard struggle to keep their heads above water, are careless and indifferent, or perhaps are driven from their own better intentions by the cruel competition of unscrupulous neighbours—I say there are hundreds of cases of this kind, in which we have to recognise the fact that the law is constantly being evaded, and that it cannot be enforced without the assistance of some external agency such as the Industrial Law Committee provides. Now you have heard how that Committee operates and to what objects its efforts are directed. Briefly, it has two main objects in view. One is to make the weakest, the most helpless and the most ignorant of the work-people aware of the rights

the law gives them, of the great protection which the law affords—to make these things known to them. And the other is to encourage people in that position to insist upon the rights which the law gives them. And there is no way in which that can be done so effectively as the way in which it is done by the Indemnity Fund, of which Lord Lytton has spoken, the object of which is to protect those workers who have the courage and the public spirit to insist on their rights, not only for themselves but for their fellow-workers—to protect them from the consequences of their action. Cases, flagrant cases, cases most revolting to our sense of justice, are quoted in the reports of the Committee, showing how people have been dismissed for insisting on these rights which the law gives them, or for appealing to the protection of the proper authorities in the defence of their rights. In cases of that kind the Committee steps in with its Indemnity Fund, and it preserves the people who have been thus unjustly dismissed, until they find other means of employment. And I ought to add, finally, that there is one other and very important function of the Committee, and that is that they themselves call the attention of the proper authorities to cases of hardship and oppression and evil conditions of work, which are also illegal, and thereby exercise a very powerful influence in getting those illegal conditions remedied.

Well, I have nothing more to say, except that, on the broadest national grounds, I wish to give my cordial support to this movement. I do not think it is a small thing: I think it is a great national service which this Committee is performing. I think the enforcement of that magnificent body of industrial law, which has been built up in this country, is of vital importance to the health and well-being of millions of our population, and I should like to add, that when we spend so many millions on various public objects, when we subscribe I do not know how many thousands every year for charitable and religious enterprises—some of them, like the conversion of the Jews, perhaps rather doubtful investments for £20,000 of money

—it does seem to me that £81 a year dropping to £76 is rather inadequate support for the work of the Industrial Law Committee.

## LONDON.—JUNE 24, 1909

### *'Communis Patria'*

[On this date the Compatriots Club entertained Colonel G. T. Denison, President of the British Empire League in Canada. Lord Milner was in the chair, and in addition to the toast of 'The Guest' proposed the toast of the Club—'Communis Patria.']

THERE is only one other toast this evening. It is our distinctive toast, 'Communis Patria.' I am not going to dilate upon it. Time was, when it was necessary to explain what we meant by it, when the political conception, which the Compatriots exist to realise, was strange to most people, and very imperfectly understood even by the limited number who had some sympathy with it. Those days are over. Whether men agree with it or not, the idea of the wider Fatherland, of the permanent association of all the Britains—not circling as satellites round the Mother Country, but coming together again, after they had long seemed to be, and in fact had been, drifting apart, drawing closer to one another in a new form of political union, in which none will be before or after other, and which will add a fresh type to the constitutions known of mankind,—I say this idea, whether men agree with it or not, no longer appears something eccentric, the exclusive possession of a few theorists. It has achieved a recognised, and indeed a foremost, place among the political objects for which men are actually striving. Those who are opposed to it can no longer hope to treat it with polite disregard as a thing visionary and unpractical. They will have openly to admit their hostility to it, and a very unpleasant position that may prove to be for them, especially in the younger communities of the British family. For it is no longer possible to doubt, as I for one have never doubted, that, now that they have realised what it means, realised that it involves no threat to their individual

development, no lowering of their status as independent and self-controlled communities, the British people of the Dominions are quite as enthusiastic about 'communis patria' as the people of these islands. It is they who have coined the phrase 'loyal to the Empire,' which is a much better and truer formula than 'loyal to England' or 'to the Mother Country.' For my own part, I have always felt that the loyalty we wanted was an all-round loyalty, the loyalty of each to all, of every member to the whole body.

I say this doctrine no longer needs preaching. It has laid hold of the minds and hearts of men in all the self-governing states of the Empire. Our difficulties to-day are of another kind. We have not got to convert people to allegiance to 'communis patria.' The allegiance exists. What we have to do is to give effect to the prevalent, the general desire of the nations of the Empire to express that allegiance in acts, to do something for 'communis patria' besides talking about it. We have to prevent that desire from being thwarted by obstacles not in themselves formidable, but which it does need some ingenuity, some energy, some zeal, to surmount. The statesmen of different parts of the Empire have all got their own local problems and difficulties, which are very engrossing. Here are a new set of questions coming to the front, with which they are not equally familiar, which are not perhaps specially attractive to many of them. They are novel and complex questions, and they do not lend themselves to the kind of treatment, I mean effective treatment for party purposes, at which the rulers of democratic communities are necessarily adepts. Under these circumstances it would only be human for them to try and give these questions the go-by. And that is what is very likely to happen, unless there is such an effective pressure of public opinion behind the men at the head of affairs, as will compel them to give hard and serious thought to the solution of these troublesome new problems.

We have a very clear issue before us just now, an important turning-point in the struggle to get something practical done for 'communis patria.' People sometimes ask us,

'What are these common interests of which you speak? Every great section of the Empire has its own separate interests, its own special connections, its own life. What is there to unite about?' Well, I think I could name a good many common interests, but there is no need of any such academic disquisition. There is at least one common interest, to the importance of which people in all parts of the Empire are just now intensely alive, and that is the command of the sea. Are we going, between us all, to do something effective in that direction? By command of the sea, I do not, of course, mean keeping other nations off it. The sea is theirs as well as ours. We claim no monopoly of the ocean highways. What I do mean is that the united British nations should have such power on the sea as to prevent their ever being cut off from one another, or their great mutual trade being subjected to serious interruption. The British nations have a very special interest in the sea. It is the sea which connects them. The very idea that that vital link might by any possibility be severed has startled them all into realising their community of interest, their interdependence, to an extent to which it has never been realised before.

## POOLE.—NOVEMBER 16, 1909

### *Tariff Reform and National Policy*

[From an address to a meeting of the East Dorset Conservative and Unionist Association.]

I ADMIT to you that I am a free lance in politics. I am not advocating Tariff Reform because it is the Unionist policy. I am fighting with the Unionists because they are pledged to Tariff Reform. And I advocate Tariff Reform because I am sincerely convinced that it is in the interests of the nation as a whole—not of any one class. It is the national aspect of that policy which appeals to me, and I had very much rather not discuss the question who is going to gain most by it, the rich man or the poor. But if I am driven to it, if I am forced to answer a question which it seems to me invidious to ask, then I say without hesitation that,

while every section of the community will in the long run benefit by a measure which is calculated to increase the prosperity of the nation as a whole, yet, as between class and class, it is the working class, whether in town or country, who have the most to gain by it. It is they who are most directly interested in the increase of employment. And, mind you, I am not thinking only of the unemployed. The fact of more work being done in this country must no doubt give employment to many men who now lack it, but it will also, by relieving the strain of competition, help those who are already employed. Tariff Reform is a national question. But if any one insists on splitting up the nation and on discussing the subject, not from the broad national standpoint, but from that of its effect on this or that class, I say it is above all a workman's question. And, mark my words, it is the working classes who are going sooner or later to carry it. They may be led astray for a time—though I am not at all sure that they will be—by the idea that there is some easier and quicker way of improving their own position than to increase the total income of the nation by an increase of its total production. The notion that that income is a fixed quantity, and that you can only augment the share of one set of people by diminishing the share of another set, is a notion which has a strong hold on many minds. But it is a very misleading notion all the same. I do not deny that it is possible by law, by custom, or by combination to increase the workman's share in the product of his labour, and in so far as that can be done without discouraging capital or driving it away, I think it is a good thing and in the interest of the community as a whole. But there is a distinct limit to this process of increasing the workman's share in any given amount of production. To pass that point is to engage in a struggle in which, while we are all fighting like wild beasts in a menagerie over our respective shares, we shall destroy the very thing we are fighting for. Nothing would be so ruinous as a social war, and most ruinous of all to the mass of the people. There is a better way than that of

improving their condition, and that is to increase the total of our production. The greater that total the larger will be the remuneration of the workman, for there is no reason whatever to fear that, as home industry advances, he will not get at least as large a proportion of the greater output as he did of the smaller. The wage-earning class in our day are not powerless serfs. They are quite as strong in one way as the owners of accumulated wealth are in another. They are perfectly able to see to it that they get their fair share of that increase of home production which Tariff Reform would bring about. And therefore, when they understand the question, as they are fast learning to understand it, they will be the stoutest of Tariff Reformers.

## HOUSE OF LORDS.—NOVEMBER 24, 1909

### *The Budget of 1909*

[On Lord Lansdowne's amendment 'that this House is not justified in giving its consent to this Bill until it has been submitted to the judgment of the country.']

THE Bill before us is so comprehensive—it contains so many measures rolled into one, and it raises so many large ulterior questions—that it is not possible for any single speaker to deal with more than a very limited portion of the case. If I do not refer to many weighty arguments, of the broader economic and political kind, which may be adduced in support of the motion of the noble Marquis, it is not because I do not agree with them. But I think I shall show more consideration for the time of the House, if I confine myself to matters of which I have had some special experience. And I must confess that there is one aspect of this Bill which possesses a certain fascination for me, that it can hardly be expected to possess for many of your Lordships. I am an old tax-gatherer, and in that capacity I cannot help feeling a professional interest in so huge an engine of taxation. It is fifteen years ago that, as head, as I then was, of the Inland Revenue Department, I was called upon to assist the Chancellor of the Exchequer

in the preparation of a Budget, which at the time was generally considered a big undertaking. I refer to Sir William Harcourt's 'Death Duty Budget,' as it was commonly called, of 1894. It was, I think, the heaviest of the eight British Budgets with which I have been intimately acquainted from the inside. That Budget was under consideration for more than a year before its introduction; it was the principal Government measure of the session; it took months to pass, and it strained to the uttermost the capacities of the leading officials of my department. It also taxed severely the energies of the Government draftsman of that day, Sir Henry Jenkyns, a man of exceptional ability, as well as of the Law Officers of the Crown. But compared with the present Budget it was a trivial affair. And yet I remember that it was severely criticised at the time as being complicated and unintelligible. I am afraid Finance Bills will always appear in that light to the layman. But I venture to say that, whether it deserved those criticisms or not, it was a model of simplicity, intelligibility, and coherence, compared with the measure with which we are at present confronted.

To say that is not to disparage in any way the ability of the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, or of those who assisted him. I think that ability is manifestly very great. But he has attempted a great deal more than could be done, or at least could be done properly, in any single year. I know I may be told that for the immense size and unwieldiness of this Budget the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Government are not to blame. The severity and the multiplicity of the new imposts—such is the argument—are the inevitable consequence of the largeness of the deficit, amounting as it does to more than sixteen millions; leaving, even after the raid upon the Sinking Fund, some thirteen millions to be raised by taxation. But that plea will not hold water for one moment. Sums as large, or very nearly as large, have more than once in recent times been added to the tax revenues of the country in a single year by financial

measures less complex, less controversial, and infinitely less meddlesome and harassing than those which we are now considering. The difficulties of the Chancellor of the Exchequer were undoubtedly great, but he has gone out of his way to increase them. It surely is unheard of that a Government, which finds itself obliged to increase the burden of the tax-payer in one year by the sum of no less than thirteen millions, should choose that occasion of all others to impose a whole bevy of superfluous taxes, not required and, indeed, not available for the needs of the year itself. I may be told that it is necessary to look ahead a little, that every Chancellor of the Exchequer does to some extent consider not only the needs of the present year but those of the immediate future. If that is so, what was the justification for giving up between three and four millions of revenue only last year, at the very time when the Government was committing the country to a new form of expenditure, which meant at least eight millions a year additional for ever ?

We hear a great deal in this debate from the Ministry and their supporters about constitutional precedent. I wonder what is the constitutional precedent for their own method of dealing with the problem of the aids and supplies to be annually granted to His Majesty ? Last year they deliberately committed the country to new and vast expenditure, for which they refused to provide, while at the same time giving up a valuable item of revenue. This year they are piling up taxation to meet problematical future expenditure. They are putting on taxation for objects not yet approved, not yet submitted even to the House of Commons, much less to the country, and which indeed exist only in a nebulous form in the mind of the Government itself. It is these proceedings, my Lords, so wholly unusual and abnormal, and fraught with such infinite possibilities of abuse, which have driven this House to take a course perfectly legitimate, no doubt, but also unusual ; a course which I believe there is not one of us who does not take with reluctance and regret, but which

is certainly less unconstitutional than the action which has provoked it. The whole immense fabric of the new Land Taxes, with all their costly, complicated, and, as I believe, unworkable provisions, is only estimated to bring in a net £50,000 to the Exchequer in the present year. Indeed, the two most contentious of these taxes, the tax on Unearned Increment—sound, I think, in principle, but as a local, not a national impost—and the Undeveloped Land Tax, which is wholly bad, are actually going to cost more in the present year than they will bring in to the Exchequer. But they are not the only taxes now proposed which have no bearing on supply for the present year. There is another item, which will bring nothing in at all in 1909-10, but which is estimated to yield £1,370,000 in 1910-11, and £2,150,000 hereafter. This is the item which is euphemistically described in the estimates as 'the revision'—revision is a good word—'the revision of the Legacy and Succession Duties.' The revision consists in raising a rate, which at present is three per cent. to five per cent.; and in sweeping away the exemption accorded to lineals and to husbands and wives, who hitherto escaped with the payment of Estate Duty only. In my humble judgment this revision is the worst feature in the Death Duty Clauses, just as these Clauses, as a whole, are one of the worst features of the Bill. It is no doubt true that it is not this or that provision of the Budget, but it is the cumulative effect of its many onslaughts on capital, which constitutes so grave a danger to the national prosperity. But the Death Duty Clauses would be very bad if they stood alone—very bad finance, I mean, quite apart from considerations of equity. At the risk of wearying your Lordships, I wish to say a few words on this branch of the subject, for it is one with which I am specially familiar.

I am not going to trouble you with particular instances of hardship, though I could give innumerable illustrations. It is not the personal but the national aspect of the case, the inevitable consequence of these enormous fines upon capital in checking enterprise and diminishing

employment, which cause me solicitude. Do we realise the pace of our Rake's Progress in overstraining this particular source of public revenue? In 1894 the revenue from Death Duties stood at ten millions. Sir William Harcourt reckoned on an ultimate increase of four millions a year, making a total of fourteen millions. As a matter of fact, partly because the additional duties were more productive than he anticipated, partly because the rates were considerably increased two years ago by Mr. Asquith, the revenue from Death Duties has risen to nineteen millions a year. It is now proposed by a whole series of increases, affecting not only large fortunes, but affecting in an even higher proportion quite moderate fortunes, to add another seven and a half millions to that revenue in the next few years. From ten millions a year to upwards of twenty-six millions a year in less than twenty years is rather a startling advance. But the ominous fact is that this spring, from which we are drawing so much more freely than ever before, is not itself one of increasing abundance.

The amount of property becoming liable to Estate Duty, during the last ten years at any rate, indicates no progress whatever. The accumulated wealth of the nation, as far as can be judged from these figures, is not at all remarkably progressive; on the contrary, it is alarmingly stationary. Let any one run his eye down the figures of the amount of property subject to Estate Duty for the last ten years, as they are given on page 48 of the Inland Revenue Report, and he will see at a glance that, while the fluctuations from year to year are considerable, there is over a number of years no decided tendency either upwards or downwards. The accumulated wealth of the nation seems to be at something like a dead level, surely a very disquieting state of things when you consider, on the one hand, the growth of population, on the other the immense increase going on all the while in the total wealth of the world. If our revenue from Death Duties is undergoing this enormous increase to which I have just referred, it is not because our

capital is increasing, but merely because a very much larger proportion of it is being absorbed by the State. That process cannot go on much longer without causing an actual diminution of the capital.

My Lords, we are living in a time when the greatest conflict of opinion I have ever known exists on all questions of public finance. There is hardly a single principle affirmed by one body of pundits which is not promptly called in question by another. But I will venture to lay down one fiscal principle which I believe is still undisputed, and that is that, when any source of revenue ceases to show expansion, it is bad policy to increase your demands upon it, unless there is absolutely no other direction in which you can look. Is not such a course, indeed, manifestly suicidal—in common parlance, killing the goose which lays the golden eggs? Now there is one great source of revenue which we have already abused to such an extent that increases of rate no longer produce a proportionate, or anything like a proportionate, increase of duty. I refer to the Liquor, and especially to the Spirit, Duties. I know that the Government now say that, though the enormous addition made to the Spirit Duties is not bringing in more than half the revenue which it was estimated to bring in, its moral excellence more than compensates for its fiscal absurdity. But even they cannot say that of the over-taxation of capital. Why, not even Mr. Keir Hardie and his friends object to capital. They only want to abolish the capitalist. The Death Duties are popular with some people because they are supposed to transfer wealth from the individual to the community. But their effect is not to transfer capital, as capital, from the individual to the State, but simply to spend it as income. The whole question is whether we can afford to spend so much capital in this way.

My Lords, the answer to that question lies in a nutshell. There is a simple test. If these periodic fines levied on capital are kept moderate in amount, so that the sum taken by the State can, on the average, be replaced by accumulation between fine and fine, then they are a con-

venient and justifiable method of raising revenue. But if they are so heavy that capital cannot, on the average, recover itself between fine and fine, then they are a wasteful and, in the long run, a ruinous method of raising it. My Lords, looking at the figures to which I have referred, as I have looked at them again and again, and speaking as a financier and a statistician, if I have any claim to respect in either character, I say it is evident that we have already reached the extreme limits of what it is possible to achieve by this method of taxation without diminishing the object taxed, and that the enormous increase now contemplated, nearly twice as great as that contemplated by Sir William Harcourt fifteen years ago, must inevitably push us over the border on to the downward slope which leads to impoverishment.

There is another and a weighty argument for calling a halt in the progressive increase of these particular duties. It would take me too long to dwell upon it. I will state it in a couple of sentences. One reason why in 1894 it was justifiable, and even I might say necessary, if our taxation was to be properly balanced, to increase the Death Duties, was that at that time there was no differentiation, under the head of Income Tax, between earned income and income derived from property. But it is right, it is both equitable and financially sound, that income derived from property should be somewhat more heavily taxed than earned income. The Death Duties, being in effect equivalent to an additional income tax on property, did in practice constitute that desirable differentiation. But we have now introduced the principle of differentiation into the Income Tax itself, and thus we have got the differentiation twice over. It might be argued that, when the Income Tax was thus altered, there was a good case for a revision of the Death Duties in a downward direction. But so far from doing that, we increased them once more. Now we are asked to increase them again to an enormous extent. The proceeding is as indefensible in equity as it is unsound from the point of view of finance.

I have dwelt so long on one point that I cannot pass in review the whole series of taxes contained in this measure. I think them all bad, but not all for the same reason. The great majority are bad in themselves. But there are some, like the additional Income Tax, which are not, in my opinion, bad in themselves, but which I should prefer to see kept in reserve for great unforeseeable emergencies. It is improvident to draw too much on these invaluable reserves in normal times. And the worst of it is that all these bad taxes are quite unnecessary. It would be perfectly possible, in my opinion, to raise the whole amount required by import duties, not only without injury to business and employment, such as this Budget would inflict, and as the mere introduction of it has already inflicted, but with actual benefit to both. I know we are told it would be impossible to raise the necessary revenue by these means. All I can say is, I should like to be allowed to try. And I hold that, before the country is committed to a wrong road in a matter of this vital importance, it is entitled to say whether it would not prefer to take the right one. I hope we shall be instrumental in giving it the opportunity. As for the contention that in doing so we are transcending our powers, and that, because for the first time in our history we hang up a Finance Bill, we shall therefore make a practice of doing so whenever we get a Finance Bill we dislike, it seems to me a patent absurdity. We have always had this power. We have never exercised it. Yet the right to exercise it has always been expressly reserved by us. That fact has been admitted over and again even by Liberal statesmen, precisely because it has been recognised that there might, once in a hundred times, be a Finance Bill of so extraordinary and exceptional a character, that we could not be expected to pass it without demur. My Lords, that exceptional occasion has now arisen. How exceptional it is, is being constantly and vehemently impressed upon us by the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself. He never ceases to proclaim that it is not the immediate financial problem which he cares

about so much as the social revolution which he is initiating. If his words mean anything, they mean that he is no friend to the private ownership of land. There are those among his supporters who are avowedly bent upon making an end of the private ownership of all forms of capital whatsoever. If we wish to maintain it, if we believe that the nation is averse to the threatened gigantic change, we cannot shrink from the conflict which is forced upon us now.

May I say a very few words in conclusion on the financial confusion and loss, which it is alleged will arise from our proposed action? The noble Marquis said that Lord Welby had not succeeded in making his flesh creep by his gloomy prognostications on that subject. I am not surprised. Lord Welby is a master of finance, none better, but it is beyond even his great powers to make much of so poor a case. Why should there be loss? why should there even be confusion in any formidable measure? It seems to be forgotten that all the terrible consequences which it is said will now arise would equally have arisen, if the Budget had failed to pass the House of Commons, as Budgets have failed to pass it before now, after the resolutions on which they were based had been acted upon for some considerable time. Is it therefore contended that the House of Commons would have no right to reject a Budget, after once having accepted the resolutions on which it was based? If so, why have a Finance Bill at all? The resolutions are sufficient. My Lords, what is the extent of the possible mischief? It is said that the Income Tax and Tea Duty, as well as the new taxes, cannot be collected. But everybody knows that, whoever is in power after the election, these two taxes will certainly be legalised before the end of the financial year. There will be an interval of a few weeks, during which their payment could not be legally enforced. But why anybody should refuse to pay them, even during that interval, when he knows he will have to do so sooner or later, I cannot imagine. It may be that an attempt will be made to clear a large quantity of tea in that interval. As a matter

of fact, I believe that the tea-dealers would have practical difficulties in doing this, because it is the practice of the shippers to warehouse the tea for them free for three months after arrival. The dealers pay a deposit on the tea when they purchase it, but they only pay up the balance of the price as they actually take delivery. If they were to take delivery of a much larger quantity than usual, they would not only be embarrassed by having to put up the money a long time before they could recover it by selling, but they would be at a loss to find places in which to store the tea. No doubt if they could escape the duty altogether, they might be tempted to face these inconveniences. But as in any case a record would be kept, and the duty could subsequently be demanded of them, there does not seem sufficient inducement for their taking this unusual course.

But, it may be said, how about the additional duties on spirits, on tobacco, and so forth ? My Lords, if this measure or a similar one ultimately becomes law, those duties will have to be paid, and if it does not become law, they will no longer have to be paid, as we contend that they ought not to be. But the amount of these duties from now to the end of the financial year will in any case not be very considerable. And as for the sums already paid under these duties, why should they be paid back ? The importers have already transferred the burden to the consumers, and if the duties were repaid, they would not be repaid to the people who had borne the burden, but would be a simple present to the importers. As a matter of fact, there is a good precedent for not repaying them. In 1902, when the Corn Duty was imposed, the duty on maize was 5d. in the resolution, but in the Bill it was reduced to 2½d. Nevertheless, the difference was only repaid in those cases in which it could be shown that the person paying the duty had not already recovered it from some party to whom he had transferred the maize. That seems perfectly just, and there is no reason why a similar procedure should not be adopted in the present case. I

do not say these things will not involve a certain amount of disturbance; of course they will. I do not say there will not be a slight leakage of revenue. But I do say that any such inconvenience and loss will be comparatively so trivial, that it cannot be weighed in the balance against the considerations of supreme moment, which have been adduced in this House in support of the amendment of the noble Marquis. With a deep sense of the gravity of the occasion, and of the responsibility which rests on every member of this House in the present crisis, but with a clear conscience and a great faith that our action, and the motives which have prompted it, will be fairly judged by our fellow-countrymen, I shall give my vote in favour of that amendment.

## GLASGOW.—NOVEMBER 26, 1909

### *The House of Lords and Duty*

[From an address to a meeting of the West of Scotland Unionist Association.]

As your chairman has told you, I have just come from listening for three nights to the debate in the House of Lords on Lord Lansdowne's amendment. I do not think that even the greatest enemy of that House will say that it has not been a striking debate, or that there has been any lack of sense on the part of the House of the gravity of the question, of the responsibility resting upon every member of it, or of the duty they owed to the country. I know you will be told that the members of that Assembly are animated by personal interest or by party spirit, but I do not think that any fair-minded man reading that debate will be able to say that the dominant considerations were not national considerations. We may be right, or we may be wrong, those of us who support Lord Lansdowne's amendment; but whether our judgment is right or wrong, our motives, I venture to think, are clear and unassailable. There is not one member of the House who is not perfectly aware that we could not if we would, and I

think we would not if we could, prevent the carrying out of the financial policy of the Government if the nation really desired it. But we hold that this is a scheme of such exceptional magnitude, with such far-reaching consequences, that, believing these consequences to be evil, we cannot make ourselves responsible for the evil which will ensue. I respect profoundly the opinion of statesmen much my superiors in experience and authority who advise the House of Lords, while condemning the proposals of the Government, nevertheless to let them pass, perhaps with a protest, on the ground that those proposals are so mischievous, and that the country will suffer so much under them, that there will be a tremendous reaction in favour of the Unionist party. I respect that opinion, but I cannot follow it. And I do not know how I could with self-respect present myself to any assembly of my countrymen saying—'I 've let you in for it, but it will pay.'

If we believe a thing to be bad, and if we have a right to prevent it, it is our duty to try to prevent it and to damn the consequences. As I say, all we claim to do is to refer the question to the nation. Let the people hear and let the people decide.

## STIRLING.—November 27, 1909

### *The Budget versus Tariff Reform*

[At the Annual Conference of the National Union of Conservatives for Scotland, Lord Clinton presiding.]

My Lord Clinton, ladies and gentlemen, if the date of this meeting had not been fixed months ago, I fear I should not have had the honour of addressing you to-night. As you all know, there is a debate at present proceeding in the House of Lords, at which both Lord Clinton and I ought to be present. Important speeches are probably at this moment being made by men of eminence on both sides of the House, speeches which one can ill afford to miss. If it were not for an excuse of peculiar validity, we should neither of us be here on this occasion.

I am not going to comment on that debate; you will no doubt read it and judge for yourselves. But there is just one point suggested by the debate, but really affecting not only the debate but the whole policy of the Government, to which I wish to refer. The Government are fond of posing at this juncture in the—for them—rather unwonted rôle of defenders of the Constitution. One speaker after another on the Government side condemns and bewails the breach, not of the law (for they all admit there is no breach of the law), but the breach of constitutional practice, which Lord Lansdowne's amendment is alleged to create. They are indignant; they are even quite pathetic about it. It cuts them to the heart, for the nonce, that anybody should be so wicked as even to think of laying an impious hand on the sacred ark of the Constitution, especially with regard to the respective rights and powers of the two Houses. But what is their own policy, I should like to know, but a deliberate attempt entirely to upset that Constitution and to alter for all time the relative position of the two Houses, taking away from the House of Lords the powers which it has always possessed, and which at this moment it undoubtedly possesses, and which it is in the highest interest of the nation that it should continue to possess? And, mind you, that was their policy, their policy openly declared and constantly reiterated, long before, for years before this action of ours, which they condemn as an invasion of the Constitution, was ever taken or thought of, long before the circumstances which have necessitated it had ever arisen. Lord Lansdowne's amendment, which would have the effect of compelling the Government to submit their financial proposals to the judgment of the country, is alleged by our opponents to be unconstitutional. We absolutely deny that, and on that I shall have a word to say directly. But the avowed policy of the Government long before that amendment was ever heard of—their avowed policy for the past three years, embodied in a resolution of the present majority of the House of Commons, proclaimed over and over again by

Liberal speakers, held up only a year ago by the Prime Minister as the main object to which his party should devote their efforts—is to reduce the constitutional rights of the House of Lords; not any rights which are now in dispute, but rights which they themselves acknowledge, and which no human being can possibly question—to reduce these rights almost to nothingness, and indeed practically to abolish them. What are these unquestioned and unquestionable rights? I will take them from a statement made in the House the other day by the highest authority on the Liberal side, by no less a person than the Lord Chancellor himself. He spoke as follows: 'To the House of Commons belongs the control over the purse, and therefore the control over Ministers of the Crown. To the Lords belongs the supreme administration of justice, surely of itself a noble attribute, and a full share in all legislation, except finance: such is the ancient and famous balance of power known to our Constitution, the envy of other nations.' Yet for two years before the present crisis arose or was ever thought of, it has been a part—indeed a first article—of the programme of the Government, to which the Lord Chancellor belongs, to take away from the Lords their full share in legislation—even legislation having nothing to do with finance—and to leave them in a position in which they would have no effective share in legislations at all. What has been, and is, the Government proposal in this respect? It is that, when any Bill has been passed in two successive sessions by the House of Commons—the same House of Commons, mind you, with no intervening appeal to the country—the House of Lords should be bound to accept it and see it passed over their heads. What is that but to deprive the Lords not only of their full share of legislation, but of any share at all worth having? What is it but to destroy 'the ancient and famous balance of power,' of which the Lord Chancellor spoke, and to knock the bottom out of that Constitution, 'the envy of foreign nations,' which he reverences so profoundly? When the Government and the party, who

have a measure up their sleeve for totally upsetting the Constitution, wax eloquent about the wickedness of a single infringement of it (though we strenuously deny that there is any such infringement), what does it remind you of? It reminds me of a certain person, who shall be nameless, rebuking sin. I have always understood that he greatly enjoys himself in that rôle, that he rebukes sin and quotes scripture 'like a very learned clerk'—almost as learned as the Lord Chancellor himself—with peculiar gusto. And that, no doubt, explains the immense fervour with which our Radical friends just now, all over the country, are proclaiming their devotion to our ancient and famous Constitution, while warning us at the same time that, if ever they get the chance, they mean to smash it up.

But now let me say one word on the question, whether the proposed action of the Lords really is an infringement of the Constitution? whether we, who always are and always ought to be the defenders of the Constitution, are doing anything inconsistent with it? We maintain most emphatically that we are not. The powers of the House of Commons are enormously greater than those of the House of Lords. We do not wish to reduce them. We do not dispute the right of the House of Commons to control the executive or to exercise the power of the purse, as that power has been understood from time immemorial, that is to say, the annual control of public expenditure, and the determination of the methods by which it is annually to be met. But that power rests not on law—in strict law the House of Lords has the right to reject any Appropriation Bill and any Finance Bill. It rests, as the Lord Chancellor himself said, on 'custom, usage and convention.' But if any one claims rights based on custom, usage and convention, he must be careful not himself to depart from customary and usual courses. He must respect the authority to which he himself appeals, otherwise the whole thing breaks down, and all parties are thrown back upon their strictly legal rights. The contention of Ministers amounts to this, that the submission of the

Appropriation Bill and the Finance Bill to the Lords is a mere formality, that it is unconstitutional for the Lords to do anything but simply accept them. But it is no mere formality. On the contrary, it is absolutely essential, not only in order to maintain the rights of the House of Lords, but in order to protect the rights of the people. Take away the right of the Lords to reject in the last resort even financial measures, and there is nothing to prevent the Commons indulging in any innovation, any departure from ancient and salutary custom with regard to such measures. If there is one thing well established in constitutional practice, it is that the Commons have no right to oust the Lords from participation in any legislation, in which they would otherwise be entitled to participate, by simply stuffing it into a Bill dealing with financial matters and labelling the whole of it 'finance.' It is just as if you were to try and escape the duty on the importation of a number of bottles of foreign spirit, by packing them in a case containing six dozen of Apollinaris, and painting the words 'mineral waters' on the outside.

And there is another sound and time-honoured principle, which is that the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his Budget should provide for the expenditure of the year—for the whole expenditure, with a reasonable margin for contingencies—but that he should not put on taxation unreasonably in excess of present or definite future requirements. This is a principle, to which I think it is impossible to attach too great importance, not so much in the interest of the House of Lords as in the interest of the taxpayers. They have reason to complain if, especially in a year when taxation has in any case to be greatly increased to meet present requirements, the Chancellor of the Exchequer goes out of his way to pile up additional burdens, in order to have lots of money to play with in the future. I can imagine no course of procedure more likely to lead to gross waste, or more oppressive to the taxpayers. They have a right to be protected against such an extravagant and burdensome innovation.

Now in both these respects the present Finance Bill goes beyond 'usage, custom and convention.' I will not dwell on the fact that it contains matters that it ought not to contain, because this point has been so admirably explained by Lord Lansdowne and other speakers in the debate in the House of Lords, with which most of those present are no doubt familiar. I will only refer in passing to the absurd excuse which is made for including a Valuation Bill—and a very bad Valuation Bill at that—a Bill which is estimated to cost two millions, and is certain to cost much more, in order to value not something real and tangible, but a metaphysical abstraction—the excuse, I say, for including this monstrosity in the Finance Bill. The excuse is that the valuation clauses are necessary to make the new land taxes work. Yes, but are the new land taxes themselves necessary? Not only are they not necessary, but they are admittedly not going to bring in anything in the present year, while the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself has not the slightest idea how much or how little they will ever bring in. Therefore it comes to this, that the excuse for putting into a money Bill something which has no business to be in a money Bill, is that it is necessary for something else which is going to bring in no money. Is it not apparent that the whole object of the proceeding is to smuggle a new law of valuation, about which the House of Lords has every right to be consulted, through the House of Lords, in such a manner that the House should be debarred from exercising that right? It would be highly dangerous for the House of Lords to let itself be circumvented in this way. But what would be much more dangerous, not for the House of Lords but for the people, would be to allow the practice to spring up of imposing, by means of the annual Finance Bill, taxation far in excess of present or calculable future requirements. No doubt, whenever new taxation is imposed, it is always to be reckoned upon to bring in something more in future years than in the year of its imposition. But it is one thing to put on taxes required for the year in which

they are put on, which will be still more productive in future years, quite another to put on taxes which are not required, and indeed wholly unproductive in the year in which they are put on, in order to have money to throw away hereafter. People generally do not seem to have realised how far the Chancellor of the Exchequer has carried this odious novelty. In his original estimate (it has been somewhat modified since, but not sufficiently to affect my argument) the Chancellor of the Exchequer reckoned that the twenty different imposts, with which he has blessed us, would bring in £14,200,000 this year, and that fourteen out of the twenty would bring in £16,955,000 next year, and £18,480,000 in subsequent years. But this is only fourteen out of the twenty. How about the remaining six? The Chancellor of the Exchequer says he has not the least idea what they will ultimately bring in. Well, as he cannot do the sum for himself, I must try to do it for him. I will assume that three out of the six—I mean the increased spirit and licence duties—will bring in no more in future years than he has estimated for the present. That is an assumption, unfavourable to my own argument, which turns on the excessive amount of taxation he is imposing, but an assumption to which I am driven by the fact that the taxation of spirits has now been so frightfully overdone that this source of revenue is no longer progressive, but stagnant. That adds £4,200,000 to the yield of the new taxes in future years, bringing the total up to £22,680,000. And there still remain the new land taxes. What am I to say about these? The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in his expansive moods, is apt to conjure up glorious—if vague—visions of the Golconda, which he has discovered for us. A golden haze floats before the eyes of his delighted followers, and none of them seem to realise that, the bigger the haul he reckons on making, the worse his case becomes. Every additional million would only help to swell the excess of the burden which he is imposing on the country over what he has any earthly right to impose. But I am not going to be as hard on the

Chancellor of the Exchequer as he is on himself. I am a sober old revenue official, and I know very well that these taxes are not a gold mine, that they are not going to bring in anything at all commensurate with the vast expenditure which they will entail to the State and to countless individuals, or with the worry and harassment they are going to cause. Indeed, they are not, strictly speaking, fiscal taxes at all, but political or electioneering taxes, their real object being to introduce an entirely new principle into our system of public finance, and a peculiarly pernicious one—the principle, I mean, that people are to be taxed not according to the amount of their wealth, but according to the nature of it, and to serve as a text for the vilification of certain classes who are thought to be unpopular. They were deemed to be necessary, as they certainly are useful, in rallying the discontented left wing of the Government's motley following. But such being their nature, it is obviously difficult to estimate them in mere vulgar pounds, shillings, and pence. Still, I have got to make the attempt, and I dare say I shall not be far wrong in putting their ultimate yield at a sum about equivalent to one penny of the Income Tax, or, in round figures, rather over two and a half millions. That brings up my little bill to upwards of twenty-five millions. That is the ultimate amount of the additional taxation which this Government, who came into office with the cry of economy, are imposing on us in a single Budget, and the imposition of one full third of which has at present nothing to justify it in the way of approved expenditure. Who can say, in view of these proceedings, that the House of Lords, which has passed Finance Bill after Finance Bill without demur, because, though not meeting with its approval, they seemed to keep within the limits of custom, usage and convention, is not now entitled to call a halt? Who can say that, in declining to give its consent to these new principles and novel methods of finance until it is evident that they meet with the approval of the nation, it is doing more than it is constitutionally entitled, or even bound to do.

But, gentlemen, I confess to you, when all is said and done, that there are matters at issue in this General Election more important than the financial vagaries of the present Government, certainly far more important than this trumped-up grievance against the House of Lords. You have to decide which of two very different roads the nation is to follow in the future, for something like five years at any rate—years which are bound to be critical and may be decisive. There is the road which the present Government asks you to tread, which combines a great increase of direct taxation with an inadequate provision for the defence of the country, which does nothing to increase employment or the resources of the community, but most unhappily threatens to involve us in a struggle—a war of classes, which will diminish both. Gentlemen, there is nothing which you, as leaders of opinion, as people called upon to afford guidance to their fellow-citizens, are more bound at all time to impress upon them than this simple truth, ignored by demagogues, that the attempt to use taxation in order to redistribute wealth will inevitably result in a diminution of the wealth that you are trying to distribute. In the struggle over the possession of it, the thing being struggled for will be, in great part, destroyed. I am not a rich man myself—far from it—therefore in what I now say, I am speaking without any personal bias. I do not believe the wealthier classes of my fellow-countrymen will shrink from any burden to be imposed upon them for legitimate public objects, provided it be equitable as between one rich man and another. They will not shrink from additional Income Tax, or Super Tax, or any other straightforward impost, which does not, in addition to the money it takes out of their pockets, involve them in unnecessary expense and a lot of bureaucratic interference with their private affairs. But they will hate being taxed for fads, by novel devices dear to faddists. And they will not only hate, they will resist, attacks made upon their wealth, attacks heralded by abuse and calumny, which seem to have no better object than that of diminishing

such wealth. Capital will resist spoliation, and, in the last resort, it can always escape it; not all capital perhaps, but that portion without which all the rest would be paralysed: I mean movable capital. I say in the last resort it can always escape spoliation by going elsewhere, going to employ workmen in foreign countries instead of here. I don't for a moment accuse the Government of wanting to drive capital out of this country, though they often use language which shows that they are not alive to the seriousness of the danger. But I do say that they are in fact so driving it, and that they are embarked on a policy which will drive it away more and more.

That is the one road. Need I tell you what we, on our side, believe to be the better way? The Unionist party stand for adequate provision for National Defence, not because they love to spend money upon fleets and armies, but because they have their eyes open to what is going on in the world, and they know that, without such adequate provision, all our present heritage, all our hopes of future progress, are as a house built upon the sand. But national strength depends not only upon fleets and armies. It depends on population and resources. There are limits to the healthy increase of population in these narrow islands, though there are portions of them—and especially perhaps Ireland—which, with a change in our fiscal policy, might support a considerably increased population in health and comfort. But there are almost no limits to the vast population in the empty spaces of our Empire. Fill them up with men of your race, and keep them one with you, and a future of almost unimaginable greatness, of perfect security, is yours. But to do that, and at the same time to ensure the maximum of work and prosperity for the people of these islands themselves, it is absolutely necessary to make a radical change in your fiscal policy, and to make it soon. The essence of that change is summed up in the words Tariff Reform, not, I beg you to observe, because duties on foreign imports, even combined with Imperial Preference and all its beneficial consequences, will alone suffice

to achieve our high objects, but because they are not only invaluable in themselves, but essential to the success of all subsidiary and related measures, because they are the foundation and the keystone of a policy aiming directly at the increase of our resources at home, and of the prosperity, the strength, and the unity of the whole Empire. Our opponents, utterly unable to grasp the meaning or the scope of the policy which centres in Tariff Reform, keep on harping on this or that difficulty, this or that inconsistency, this or that inconvenience which is involved in it. Most of these objections are bad. I have answered many of them myself over and over again. But some of them are, I admit, valid, though they are far from being sufficiently weighty to affect the general soundness of our policy. But what is that but to admit that we are not quacks, that we have not got a nostrum, a panacea, which will cure all the ills to which human flesh is heir. It is enough for me that we have got a policy which does make directly for the increase of employment at home, and for closer commercial and other relations between the British Dominions throughout the world. It is enough for me that we have got a policy which, by increasing our resources, will give us the means of adopting supplementary measures to remove blots in our economic system, which Tariff Reform by itself may not sufficiently effect. One thing which I have some doubt about, for instance, is whether Tariff Reform will do as much as I should like it to do for agriculture. I doubt whether, say, a five per cent. duty on imported food-stuffs coming from other parts of the Empire, while it will undoubtedly encourage food-production throughout the Empire, and ultimately make the Empire in this vital respect self-sufficient, with a general level of prices lower than we should otherwise see, I say I doubt whether it will directly or immediately benefit our agriculturists as much as the industrial community will be benefited by a graduated duty on imported manufactures. No doubt agriculturists will benefit materially—not from a rise in prices (for an immediate rise in prices seems probable

in any case, with or without Tariff Reform, and an ultimate high level is much less likely with Tariff Reform than without it), but from the increased home demand for their produce, especially in the case of perishable articles, not easily imported from over sea. But their interests have been so grossly sacrificed in the past, that I am not satisfied that this indirect and limited advantage is all that they are entitled to, compared with such great advantages to all classes interested in industry, and especially the working classes, as any well-devised measure of Tariff Reform would undoubtedly ensure. And therefore I think we should consider other measures for the good of agriculture as an essential part of our programme. You know that the Unionist party are pledged to do what they can to increase the number of owners. That is in sharp contrast with the Radical policy, which turns more and more against any increase in the number of owners of land, and more and more in favour of the universal ownership of the State. But it is one thing to increase the number of owners of land, another to enable them to thrive on it. I tell you frankly, the State does less to help agriculture in this country than in any other with which I am acquainted. I think we must turn over a new leaf in this respect, and in turning it over I want to be guided not by theoretical considerations, but to give help in directions in which it has been demanded for years past by practical agriculturists themselves.

I cannot go further into this subject at the end of a long speech. If I revert in conclusion to the Imperial aspect of our policy, it is because that is the aspect of it—essentially inseparable though it may be from all the rest—which in a General Election is most likely to be snowed under. But, gentlemen, it is not an aspect which the Unionist party can ever allow to be obscured or forgotten. Least of all, if you will allow me to say so, can Scotch Unionists—or indeed Scotsmen generally—afford to forget it.

Wherever I have gone, in Egypt, in South Africa, in Canada, I have found Scotsmen to the fore (out of all proportion to the numbers of Scottish people at home as

compared with the English, Welsh, or Irish) in running the Empire which they have done so much to create. If any race in these islands has a right to be proud of that Empire, and has a deep and abiding interest in it, it is the Scottish race. And these Scotsmen in our over-sea Dominions, who constitute so great a part of their population, and even a greater proportion of its most thriving, most progressive, and most powerful elements, whatever may be their opinions on political questions generally (and I dare say many of them are pretty Radical and democratic), are yet, with comparatively few exceptions, Imperialists and Tariff Reformers. They cannot understand, many of them, how so obviously sound and national and patriotic a policy as that of Imperial Preference should have come to be a party question at all. And though they abstain, and rightly abstain, from doing or saying anything which might look like interference with our local party controversies, there is no doubt they would be heartily glad to see that policy win, and to see it raised once for all from being the battle-cry of a party to being the accepted policy of the nation.

That is what we have got to do. It is a tremendous long, uphill struggle, but we are going to do it. And in that struggle I want to see Scotland take the place which, in view of the Imperial instincts and achievements of her people, of right belongs to her.

## RAMSGATE.—December 14, 1909

### *The Church's Work abroad*

[At a missionary meeting presided over by the Archbishop of Canterbury.]

Speaking as a layman, and as one who has spent some of the best years of his life in the work of civil administration in distant parts of the British Empire and the countries connected with that Empire, I think I can take a fairly detached view of the work of the Church abroad. Of course, as a churchman, my personal sympathy is with

the efforts of the religious body to which I belong, but I might say that it is equally with all the other Christian agencies which aim at promoting the same great end. But as a civil administrator in countries where the vast majority of the population was not only not British but not Christian, it has been my duty, as it has been the duty of many other men in my position, to maintain a neutral attitude, and to try as far as lay in my power to maintain even-handed justice between men of the most various religious creeds. British administration throughout the world ought certainly always to be based upon Christian principles, and to be animated by Christian ideals, but that is only in the broadest sense. As between different religious communities the British administrator is pledged to perfect tolerance and impartiality. No other attitude, indeed, is practicable in an Empire containing hundreds of millions of men of races alien to our own, having many various religions, some of them hardly deserving the name of religion, but some also great, ancient and venerable creeds. That being the case, it is inevitable that a civil administrator, whatever his personal beliefs and predilections are, should, in his civil capacity, acquire the habit of judging of all forms of religious endeavour by their effects. What interests him is their bearing upon the matters with which he is specially concerned—such as peace, order, justice, prosperity, social progress—all those aspects of human well-being which are specially committed to his care. . . . And speaking only of what has come under my own observation, I should like to repudiate an accusation—an accusation which is frequently brought against Christian missions, and a charge with which many of you may be familiar—the charge that the natives are not improved, but are more often spoilt, by their conversion to Christianity. It is said that native converts are insincere. It is said that they become insolent, unruly, indolent, and that they trade upon Christianity in order to gain an advantage over their fellow-men. I am not prepared to say that this may not sometimes be the case in some parts of the world. All I can

say is, that there is no warrant for this charge in those parts of the world with which I am personally acquainted, in South Africa especially. Wherever I have gone throughout the length and breadth of that great country, I have found the influence of Christian Missions an influence for the good. I repeat that I am speaking from my purely lay point of view. And I defy any one to find—I will not say any individual, for that is not a fair test, but any community—any district throughout South Africa, in which the influence of Christian Missions is not an influence that is heartily welcomed by every civil administrator who knows his business.

Black and white have got to live side by side in South Africa, that is the great crux of South African society. Upon the manner in which the difficulties of contact between the black and white races are dealt with by statesmen, the whole future of the country depends. And that policy, again, will be determined by the spirit in which the white race, which must be the dominant race, comes ultimately to regard the more numerous and dependent black race, by which it is everywhere surrounded. Two dangers threaten that solution: uninstructed sympathy on the one hand, and unchristian selfishness on the other. Much harm has been done in the past, and much prejudice caused among South African whites, by people in the Mother Country—good people, animated by excellent intentions but possessed of inadequate knowledge—who have espoused, or seemed to espouse, the cause of the natives against the whites. Their objects have been good; they have wanted to help the natives; but, in fact, they hurt them far more than they helped them, by hardening the hearts of their white rulers against them. We have learnt —it has taken us a long time to learn it—that interference from home, whether it is political interference, or the needless, irritating interference of moralising over them, or preaching at them, does far more harm than good with the South African white. It is from South Africa itself, from the men living in the country, men who have identified

themselves with it, South Africans by birth, or at any rate by residence and sympathy, that the higher appeal must come.[1]

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## HUDDERSFIELD.—DECEMBER 17, 1909

### *Taxing the Foreigner*

[This speech, and the two immediately following it, were delivered during the General Election of 1909-10, which was brought on by the rejection of the Budget in the House of Lords.]

SPEAKING in Glasgow just three weeks ago, I ventured to predict two things. One was that the passing of Lord Lansdowne's amendment would be the signal for a tremendous outburst of mechanical clamour against the House of Lords on the part of the Government and its principal partisans, a clamour intended to give the impression of widespread popular indignation. I do not say that it needed any great intelligence to foresee that. But my second prediction was rather bolder. It was that, if we only kept our heads cool and did not rush out to fight the clamourers on the ground of their own choosing, this attempt to give the impression of widespread popular indignation would fail. And that is just what has happened. It is quite clear by now that all the outcry comes simply from the out-and-out party men who have raised the very same outcry a score of times within my own recollection, and who spend their lives looking out for any and every chance of raising it. Of course the Radicals can get up great party meetings against the House of Lords. They always could. We know that the existence of that House is an inconvenience to the Radical party, and for the Radical party man that is, no doubt, a sufficient reason why it should be reduced to impotence. But it would be difficult to imagine a more pitiable failure than the demonstrations which have been intended to show that the man in the street, who does not happen to be a sworn adherent

[1] The only existing report breaks off at this point, and the concluding portion of the speech is irrecoverable.

of any particular party, is furious with the House of Lords. The man in the street remains as cool as a cucumber.

Why indeed should he be furious ? Because he has been given a chance of making himself felt, instead of having matters of the greatest moment settled over his head by the people who took him in four years ago with their Chinese Slavery imposture and their promises of economy and retrenchment ? No. The great and famous lions of the Radical party, especially the young lions, may go lashing their tails and keeping up a continuous roar of minatory declamation. They will not do themselves any good by it. And the reason is simple enough. Indignation, to be contagious, must be sincere. This indignation is too obviously pumped up. They cannot really be so very indignant with the House of Lords for doing precisely what they wanted it to do. Just consider the absurdity of their position. The power of the House of Lords—which by the way they habitually exaggerate—the power of the House of Lords is, according to them, the great curse of our political system. It is the one thing which prevents this country being the Paradise which they are longing to make it. They admit that they have been trying, year in year out, to cripple that power and have not known how to do it. Now, however, they think they see their chance. ' At last,' they exclaim, ' we have got you. You have put your foot into it this time, and no mistake, and we are not going to let you out of the trap until we have made you harmless for ever.' Well, but that being the position, why all this exuberance of wrath ? You cannot be honestly furious, even with an enemy, for giving you the chance of a lifetime. Either therefore all this rage is feigned, or if it is to any extent genuine—and I really think they are getting a bit angry, they are so very abusive —the reason can only be, that they fear their great manœuvre is not turning out as successful as they expected. And there, for once, I agree with them. That manœuvre consisted in trying to divert public attention from the constructive policy of the Unionist party, of which the Radicals

are desperately afraid, by conjuring up the bogey of an aristocratic conspiracy against popular government. But we are not going to let them divert it, or to waste our breath, or your time, in disproving the existence of a danger in which nobody really believes. Popular government in danger from the House of Lords! Who takes that story seriously? We may all be fools in the House of Lords, though the recent debate hardly proved it, but we are not quite such fools as to think that we can by any possibility thwart the deliberate will of the nation. I do not believe there is one of us who wishes to. I know I do not myself. But, anyway, we are all absolutely convinced that even if we did wish we could not do it. If there is any body in this country, which could by any possibility tyrannise over the mass of the people, it is the House of Commons, and that only because it would claim, possibly without warrant, to represent them. The despotism of a Single Chamber elected by the people, but free, when once elected, from any effective control, is, I think, a real danger. It could not last for ever, but it might last long enough to do irreparable mischief. But more of that another day. To-night, at any rate, I am not going to let myself be drawn into a discussion of the constitutional question to the neglect of what is at this juncture far more urgent, and that is the Trade question, the question of industry, of employment. Are we to go on any longer, five years longer, or four years longer, or even one year longer, maintaining the handicap under which British industry labours, the handicap which we ourselves have created, and which it is absolutely in our power to remove? That is the question which by your votes next January you have to decide. And it is a very vital question. It affects, and affects profoundly, the future of this nation, our strength, our security, our capacity to bear the burden of those armaments which are necessary for our defence. It affects the unity of the Empire. But it also affects directly the well-being of countless individuals, men and women, and especially of those who have to live by the labour of their hands. It is, as I have said before,

a workman's question, the greatest and most pressing of all workmen's questions at the present day. It is because the financial policy of the Government does nothing to remove that handicap, does nothing to assist industry or to promote employment, but rather goes out of its way to injure both, and because in doing so we believe it runs counter to the wish, as it certainly runs counter to the interest, of the nation, that we are resolved to challenge it.

Radical orators go up and down the country saying that the opposition to the Budget is due to the desire of the rich to escape taxation. It is easy to take in a lot of people by assertions of this character, because most of us naturally have not got all the figures at our fingers' ends. Any one who has can see at once that all this talk about this Budget being a poor man's Budget, and the rich being opposed to it for that reason, is hopelessly wide of the mark. The Budget is a bad Budget because it taxes rich and poor alike in the most clumsy and inequitable way. It operates unfairly, as between one poor man and another, and as between one rich man and another. But it is the method by which it raises the money, alike from rich and poor, not the proportion in which the burden is divided between rich and poor, which is so objectionable. Certainly the last thing I should wish would be to see that proportion altered to the disadvantage of the poor.

But what are the facts? Of the fourteen millions of new revenue, which Mr. Lloyd George set out to raise in the present year, some six millions were to come from tobacco, beer, and spirits, that is, if we regard the increased licence duties as constituting an additional charge on beer and spirits. The great bulk of these six millions were bound to fall on the mass of the people. Would they have to pay more under a Tariff Reform Budget? They certainly would not. The argument that Tariff Reform would be more onerous for the mass of the people than the present proposals will not bear examination for a minute. As against these six millions on articles of general consumption, there were between seven and eight millions which Mr. Lloyd

George proposed to raise by direct taxes on the well-to-do. I say it is a libel on the well-to-do to represent the enormous amount of opposition, which the Budget has aroused, and rightly aroused, as due to a selfish resistance on their part to that amount of taxation. The Income Tax alone was raised three times, raised in all by upwards of fifteen millions a year, during the South African War, and the increase was borne without a murmur. The wealthier classes of the community recognised that the charge was necessary; they recognised that its distribution as between one wealthy man and another was fair, and there was absolutely no resistance. But what did the Radicals say then? They said that it was a mistake to suppose that if a tax was paid only by the rich, it was the rich only who felt it. 'So far as the question of employment is concerned'—I am quoting from the words of an electioneering pamphlet emanating from the Liberal Publication Department—'the effect of a tax is the same, whether it is paid by rich or poor. If the rich man has to pay an extra £50 for Income Tax, he has £50 less to spend on multifarious industries. The people he was employing are thrown out of work.' And when they said that they were quite right. What they said then we say now. We do not object to the direct taxation of the rich if it is necessary and inevitable, but we do contend that, inasmuch as it is not only felt by the rich, but by the whole community, inasmuch as it does tend to check enterprise and lessen employment, we are not justified in increasing it as long as there are other means of raising the money we require, which will not have the same regrettable consequences, which so far from diminishing employment in this country will actually increase it.

We may have to put fresh taxation on the wealthier classes of the community some day. If more money has to be taken out of British pockets, I do not object to its coming out of the pockets of those who are, comparatively speaking, rich, although, as our opponents themselves admit, it is not only the rich who will feel it. My personal

opinion is that the wage-earning class, as a class, already pays its fair share towards the expenses of the State, though I do not think that as between different sets of wage-earners, or different localities, the payment is very justly distributed. But before we take more out of any British purses, light or heavy (and whichever we take it out of there is always so much less income left to be divided between us all), I say, before we dip further into British purses, let us see whether we cannot, by way of a change, get just a little contribution out of the foreigner. He makes a very free use of the British open market. He pays nothing for the upkeep of it. But when we take our goods into his market, he makes us pay through the nose. It is true that our Radical friends deny, and with quite impolite vehemence—calling us 'quacks' and 'gulls' and so forth, and making up by the strength of their epithets for the poverty of their argument—that it is possible to make the foreigner contribute to our revenue in this way. They assert that all import duties must necessarily fall entirely on the consumer. But is that the experience of British men of business who import into foreign countries? Are they always able, when an import duty is put on, or raised, just to add the amount of that duty to the price which they charge their foreign customers? Every man who knows anything about business knows that that is not the case. For my own part I can hardly take up a paper without reading a letter or a speech from some British man of business, showing how the imposition of a duty upon the goods, which he sells abroad, has not resulted in an increase of cost to the foreign consumer, but in a loss of profit to him, the importing British manufacturer. Here for instance is a letter in the *Morning Post* from a gentleman who does a considerable business with France. 'Mr. Churchill,' he says, 'not having had a commercial education, or any business experience, naturally is unaware that what he describes as "a gospel of quacks" is an everyday business proposition, which every manufacturer doing a foreign trade has to consider.' Then, after describing how the French

import duty actually operates in his own case, he concludes, 'Thus in order to retain my hold on the French market I pay the duty.' Now listen to a similar experience, recently published in the *Birmingham Daily Mail*, dealing not with France but Germany. 'Some years ago,' says this witness, 'we exported a certain line of glass goods to Germany, doing a fair amount of business at a moderate profit. Presently the Germans began to make this line of goods for themselves, and put on a five per cent. duty. We were able to meet this by cutting down profits, and again when the duty was raised to ten per cent. we could just hold our own. But when the duty was raised to twenty per cent. our position was hopeless, and the whole business passed from us to the German manufacturers.' You see from these instances how, with moderate import duties, the French and the Germans do manage to make us contribute to their revenue. Why then is it impossible for us to make them contribute to ours? But I have not yet done with my last witness. He has something to say on another very important point. You know it is a favourite argument of our opponents that if an import duty were placed on foreign goods imported into this country, and competing here with British goods of the same kind, not only would the consumer necessarily pay the duty on the foreign goods, but the price of the British goods would also be enhanced by the amount of the duty. Radical orators constantly assume that as self-evident. Not only is it not self-evident, but it is not true. I have shown you that the consumer does not necessarily pay the duty on the foreign goods. Now let me show you why the price of the British goods is not always, or even generally, enhanced by the amount of the duty. The writer whom I have just quoted, gives the reason. 'Did the German manufacturers,' he says, 'raise their prices twenty per cent., the equivalent of the duty imposed? No. They were doubtless "willing and anxious and eager," but it was quite impossible to do so, and why? Simply because the competition between themselves was quite keen enough to

keep down prices.' The competition among home producers is what is always forgotten, when people assume that the duty on the foreign article will be added to the price of the similar article made at home. It is a very pretty theory, but, like so many other fiscal theories, it does not square with the facts. Now I could keep you here all night quoting evidence on this subject. But I will only give you one more illustration, and a very striking one, which deals with both the points I am now making. This is what the Chairman of one of the biggest British businesses, J. and P. Coats, Limited, said to his shareholders only the other day: 'Theorists,' he said, 'will tell you that it is inevitable that the consumer pays the import duties, but that has not been our experience. There are many important markets where local manufacturers are protected by import duties, and in which we have for over twenty years had to submit not only to a gradual reduction of turnover, but also to greatly reduced profits, as we could not increase our prices by the amount of the duty. But it would be a mistake to assume that our competitors charged more for their production on account of their being protected. In one of the largest of the countries referred to, namely Germany, sewing cotton has been exceptionally cheap in spite of a duty equalling about fifteen per cent. on the cost of the qualities chiefly consumed.' So you see, it is not as a matter of fact impossible to make the foreign importer pay the duty, and the imposition of a duty does not, as matter of fact, involve an increase in the price of the home-made article. On the contrary, it may even result in a reduction of the price, because the home manufacturers, having now got a larger and a surer market, may be able to reduce the cost of their product to the consumer and yet make the same profit as formerly for themselves. Our Radical friends will really have to give up asserting that import duties necessarily enhance the cost of living. That is only true of the sort of duties which they themselves have such a particular fondness for, I mean duties of enormous amount levied on

a few articles, and by preference on articles which we cannot possibly produce at home. But it is not true of the duties which we Tariff Reformers advocate, that is to say, duties of moderate amount not confined to one or two articles, but imposed, as a general rule, on all articles which compete in our market with our own products.

Such duties will not only bring us in revenue, a substantial portion of which will be paid by the foreigner, but they will have the additional and even greater merit of establishing fair play between the foreign and the home producer, and will tend to keep work in this country which at present is being filched away from us. I know I shall be told that import duties cannot at one and the same time bring in revenue and encourage home production. But, as a matter of fact, if import duties are moderate in amount, both these results follow. In some cases the foreign goods still come in, paying the duty. In other cases they no longer come in, or no longer to the same extent; then there is so much more work for the home producer. And so much more revenue too, though in this case the revenue does not take the shape of import duties, but of excise, or increased taxes, or stamps, or rates. In one form or another there is an addition to our internal public resources, an addition which, though in this instance it does not come from the foreigner, is nevertheless taxation of the most wholesome and unobjectionable kind. It is paid out of wages which, but for the import duties, would never have been earned, and out of profits which, but for those duties, would never have arisen. And here, indeed, I touch a central and vital difference, the deep gulf which divides the ideas of us Tariff Reformers from those of the Radicals and the present Government. Our first concern is with the amount of the national production. Give us more activity of industry, more enterprise, more work, and the revenue will increase of itself. You will then have less need to harry people with new taxes. The Radical idea is that you can only provide for social reform, for the good of those who are less well-to-do, by

plundering those who are better-to-do. We do not believe that you will ever do it in that way. We do believe that you can do it in one way, and only in one way; that is, by increasing the total amount of your national output, from which the wages of workers, the profits of capitalists, and the revenue of the State, are all alike derived. Let us look to our production, first of all here at home, next in all the countries over which the British flag flies. Let us free ourselves from the insane delusion that a nation grows richer by buying outside its own borders what it is perfectly able to produce within them. Foreign trade is a blessing where, with the excess of our own production, we buy things which we need and cannot ourselves produce. It is not a blessing where, in the blind worship of immediate and often only temporary cheapness, we allow our own basic industries to be undermined. That may lead to an increase of imports for a time. It may even lead to an increase of exports, though that is no advantage, but the reverse, if it only means that we are exporting to pay the foreigner goods which otherwise would have remained here to pay our own fellow-countrymen. There is no profitable increase of foreign trade except that which results from a positive increase of the total national production, from our buying more because we have more to sell. These lessons stare us in the face to-day from every corner of the world, from across the North Sea, from across the Atlantic. It is the countries, whose first thought has been the promotion of their own industries, which are challenging, and will soon do more than challenge, our old supremacy in foreign trade. Do not let us be deluded by the idle fear that reasonable import duties will injure our commerce or our shipping. Have they injured those of Germany? Have they even restricted her imports? It is not the tendency of such duties to diminish the imports of a country, but to alter their character, to increase the proportion of raw material and partly manufactured goods imported, while they diminish the proportion of more fully finished articles. In other words, they tend to increase

the imports which give most employment to the people of the importing country. It is that—the increase of home employment, and profitable home employment—which is one of the two great objects of Tariff Reform. And the other great object, though time will not allow me to dwell upon it at length to-night, is to strengthen our hold upon the markets of the Empire, to find increasing outlets for our surplus produce in other countries under the British flag, to bind them more closely to us and us to them. Do what we will to increase our home production, there are an enormous number of things which we must obtain from outside these islands, hundreds of millions' worth of food and of raw material, and in order to be able to buy these things we must sell our own goods. But the goods we have to sell are being produced by foreign nations also. They put up duties against us. They compete with us in every market, even in the markets of our own Empire. It is not as easy for us as it used to be to find customers for all that we must sell in order to be able to buy what we must have. Is it nothing to us that, in this fierce and growing competition, we still hold a position of vantage, a preference, in some of the greatest and most expanding markets in the world, some of the markets which have the greatest future? Let us look to it that we maintain, and, if possible, increase that preference while there is yet time. The golden opportunity will not be ours for ever. The sands are running in the hour-glass. Now is the time to strike a blow, a very different one from the spiritless and disunited effort of 1906, to free yourselves from the shackles of an antiquated creed, to give fair play to British industry, and at the same time to open the door which has been banged and barred and bolted against our fellow-countrymen in the Dominions. That is a truly great and national policy, and though it can only be started by means of a party victory, it needs nothing but a fair trial to rally to its support not one party only but the vast majority of the nation.

## STOCKPORT.—December 18, 1909

### *Single Chamber Government*

[At a meeting of the Stockport Conservative Association.]

I HOPE we shall have a friendly discussion this afternoon. I addressed a meeting considerably larger than this at Huddersfield last night, and I am glad to find from my experience there that you in the North of England believe in free political discussion. No attempt had been made to exclude our political opponents from that meeting. They were represented there in very considerable numbers, but though many of them signified dissent from my views in a perfectly legitimate way, there was no attempt to prevent my giving free expression to them, as I—and I believe the whole of our party—would never attempt by disorderly conduct to prevent a fair hearing being given to our opponents. I am going to begin with a remark which I will frankly confess is not original, but which I heard last night at the meeting to which I have referred, from a young speaker of the Unionist party, Mr. Boyd Carpenter, who, I believe, is a candidate or prospective candidate for one of the neighbouring divisions—I think Colne Valley. He is one of a body of very able young men who, I am glad to think, are the standard-bearers of the Unionist cause in many constituencies, and whom I should be more than glad to see returned to the House of Commons for other than party reasons, because I believe by their debating ability, by their knowledge, and by their public spirit, they would be a great addition to any legislative assembly.

The remark to which I have just referred was to the effect that, if any proof were needed of the necessity of having a Second Chamber in this country, it would be afforded by the circumstances of this particular election. That puts very neatly a point which I think must have forced itself during the last few weeks on every thinking man. What is the system of a Single Chamber, which is now being

preached to us as the perfect expression of democracy—the highest development of the ideal of popular government, government by the people for the people? You are to give your vote once every five years, in all the heat and turmoil of a General Election, with all the cross-currents, all the confused issues by which such an election is characterised; you are to give your vote in a controversy, in which the issue may be decided by a Chinese Slavery lie or an Old Age Pension lie—or some other lie which may be still in course of preparation; and then, having done that, you are to part for five years with all influence whatever over the destinies of your country. You are to give a blank cheque to a majority, possibly an accidental majority, possibly a very small majority, or, rather, not even that; you are to give a blank cheque to the leaders or the leader of that majority. You know perfectly well what party government is. Is it to be supposed for a moment that the six hundred men, who will be elected at this approaching contest, will be free to decide the particular questions, which may come before them as members of the House of Commons, entirely according to their own best judgment on the merits of each particular question? You know well that in fact that is not what happens. Some question arises. It is taken into consideration by the Cabinet. They come to a decision which may not even be the decision of the majority, but may be forced on them by one or two of their strongest men. The measure thus decided on is submitted to the House of Commons, where the party has to toe the line, compelled to accept the decision of its leaders. How many of the men, who voted almost with unanimity for the now suspended Budget, agreed with all or even most of it? Many of them dissented absolutely from most of its provisions, but in the long run party discipline prevailed, and they had to vote in accordance with the decision of their leaders.

That is what you have to think of in connection with the effort to establish the Single Chamber system in this country. At one election the people would give into the

hands, not of the majority in the House of Commons, but of the particular man or men leading that majority, absolute control over the destinies of the country, and whatever measures he or they introduced would become law, whatever might be the opinion of the majority of the people regarding them when they were actually introduced. That would be a tall order at any time, but it is a perfectly preposterous order at the present time, when so many important issues are raised at once. The present Prime Minister—I am glad that his name is well received, for he is an old friend of mine, and however much I differ from him politically, I recognise his ability and his distinguished public services. There is one quality which his opponents have never denied him, and that is lucidity of statement. I am grateful to him for the clearness with which he has told us how he means to interpret victory at the coming contest, if he should be fortunate enough and the country unfortunate enough to see that result. Mr. Asquith tells us very clearly in what sense he would interpret a decision of the country in his favour at the approaching election. We all know that it would mean approval of the Budget, and the nineteen or twenty new taxes with which the Chancellor of the Exchequer has blessed this happy land. It also goes without saying that Mr. Asquith's victory would mean postponement, for the whole period of the coming Parliament, of any measure of Tariff Reform. We should have to look on for some time longer, while foreign competition gained more and more ground even in the markets of our own Empire, and while commercial treaties between our own Dominions and foreign nations—treaties forced upon those Dominions because we declined to accept the hand they stretched out to us—gradually reduced and possibly destroyed that preference which we at present enjoy in their great and growing markets. We should be impotent in the matter. We should have to look on in impotence at the development of that process, as we have had to look on in impotence at the making of the treaty between

France and Canada, which has already injured, though it has not destroyed, the valuable preference we enjoy in the Canadian market.

But a far more serious treaty is hanging over our heads, and that is a commercial treaty between Canada and Germany, and one which would have grave consequences for our position in one of the greatest colonial markets. A new and formidable impetus would certainly be given to the negotiations for such a treaty by the victory of the Liberal party at the polls. Let us look at some further consequences. Mr. Asquith has made it clear that he would regard a victory for his party as a decision of the country in favour of permanently depriving the House of Lords—our only Second Chamber, and he does not propose to constitute any other—of anything like an effective check on rash legislation. They would be given a perfectly useless power of delay, but they would not be allowed to retain the power, which is the very power which you want a Second Chamber to exercise, of being able to refer any question to the nation, in cases in which it appears that the majority of the House of Commons is acting contrary to the nation's wishes. I was just about to say, that Mr. Asquith has also declared that he would regard a victory of his party at the polls as a decision of the country in favour of the establishment of Home Rule for Ireland —that is, in favour of the introduction of a system which the people of the United Kingdom have on two separate occasions, when that issue, and practically no other issue, was before them, decisively rejected—a proposal which, unless it were hopelessly mixed up with other issues, has not a ghost of a chance of being accepted. The programme which Mr. Asquith announced includes Home Rule for Ireland, but it is to be unaccompanied by Home Rule for any other part of the United Kingdom. Ireland, already grossly over-represented in the House of Commons, is to have complete management of her own local affairs, but she is still to retain that gross over-representation in order to manage the local affairs of other parts of the

United Kingdom—the local affairs of England, for instance—to decide them possibly contrary to the wish of the people of England, possibly contrary to the votes of the majority of the representatives of England, in the interests of the Radical party. What are the other measures for which Mr. Asquith proposes to take the victory of his party at the polls as giving him a mandate? There is the Disestablishment and Disendowment of the Church in Wales —a measure of which I will only say that, while it would cripple a powerful agency of religious and moral progress, it would not be of the smallest benefit to any living human being either in Wales or elsewhere; and that it is a measure regarded with complete indifference by the majority of the people outside Wales, except in so far as it might be welcome to a certain party as paving the way to the Disestablishment and Disendowment of the Church of England.

Mr. Asquith would also regard his victory as giving him a mandate for making an end of Church schools—by which particular abortive scheme for making an end of them, out of the two or three which his Government has recently proposed, he does not tell us; nor yet whether he intends to adopt some totally new scheme — a scheme which, for all we know, might involve secular education. The only thing we can be sure of is, that none of the schemes which may be proposed by the Government on this subject are schemes which can by any possibility have been under the consideration of the people of this country at this election, or with regard to which their decision on this occasion can be regarded as the expression of any reasoned judgment or conviction. Again, the Prime Minister would regard a victory for his party as giving him a mandate to reintroduce our old friend the Licensing Bill. I voted for that Bill when it came before the House of Lords, because I considered that it contained several useful and necessary provisions. I also considered that in some of its clauses it inflicted injury and injustice on a legitimate trade, and those portions of it I should have done my best, if I had had an opportunity, to help to amend. I am not

going to discuss the merits of the Bill. All I will say is that, in anything like the form in which it was recently introduced, it is one of the most unpopular measures with the great majority of the people of this country which it is possible to conceive; and it is a measure which, by itself, and on its own merits, would never have a ghost of a chance of meeting with general approval. Furthermore, the Prime Minister would regard the victory of his party as giving him a mandate to gerrymander our electoral system, by removing those anomalies in that system which are disadvantageous to the Radical party, such as plural voting, and leaving unremedied those anomalies such as the unequal distribution of seats, which are advantageous to it.

Finally, he would regard such a victory as giving him a mandate for the carrying out of a large programme of social reform—which may be good or bad, but about which we know absolutely nothing. I am very doubtful whether the Prime Minister himself has as yet any clear notion what he means to propose. But what we do know is that that large programme, whatever its merits or demerits, is one about which the country cannot possibly be exercising any sort of reasoned or considered judgment during the forthcoming election. The only thing that is quite certain about the Radical programme of social reform is that, whatever may be its merits in some respects, it will have to contain provisions which are devised to pay for the support of the extreme men, sometimes politely called Socialists—though I think the term is much too good for them—the extreme men, the land nationalisers, the nationalisers of everything, for whose support his leading colleagues—I say 'leading' advisedly, for they seem to lead him—bid loudly in every speech which they make, and without whose enthusiastic support it is perfectly well known to everybody that the Liberal party would come to hopeless grief in the approaching contest. These are the whole packet of big momentous issues on which, if you have a Single Chamber system, you are going to be supposed by your single vote

next January to have expressed a conclusive opinion. Can any reasonable man say that it is possible to settle all these momentous issues off-hand and for good, and all in the heat and chaotic controversy of the next six weeks? You are not even going to pretend to settle them. If the Radical theory of government is good, what you are going to do is not to settle them, but to give the majority, to whichever party it may belong—the majority which results from the next appeal to the ballot-box—power, plenary authority to settle them all in whatever way they choose out of the dozen ways in which any one of them may be settled, without anybody having power to control or revise their decision, or to bring it before the country for further consideration. It is only necessary to consider these things in order to see that the theory of true democratic government, the government of the people by the people, would be reduced to an absurdity.

But there is another aspect of the case to which I want briefly to direct your attention. What a vista of turmoil, of confusion, of destructive and not constructive activity, is presented by the programme which the Prime Minister has sketched out, and which is based on the principle of keeping together, by mutual accommodation bills, the bunch of minorities constituting what is described as the Liberal party! That party is agreed on nothing except predatory taxation and hostility to the House of Lords. Apart from those two principles, they are simply so many minorities, so many sections, each with a pet measure which it is determined to pass. In order to accomplish their various objects they are prepared, though very often with wry faces, to swallow the pet measures of their associates. Not one of these nostrums, not disestablishment, not secular education, not the Licensing Bill, certainly not the gerrymandering of our electoral system, would commend itself upon its merits to the people as a whole, and yet by this ingenious arrangement the whole lot might be forced upon you in the course of a single Parliament. As I have said, what a vista of turmoil and confusion such a

programme opens! With one exception, not a single item in it holds out hope of real benefit to any section of the community, hope of removing any of the economic or other evils under which we labour.

In speaking of an exception, I refer to the vaguely adumbrated policy of social reform. Social reform is not the peculiar possession of any political party. I do not want to drag party considerations into the discussion of Social Reform, but if you look at the subject historically, the Unionist party has as good and, I think, a better record, beginning with the factory legislation of the late Lord Shaftesbury, than any other party. I admit that good measures of social reform, such as the Trade Boards Act and the Labour Exchanges scheme, have been introduced by the present Government. They have been passed, and gladly passed, by that much-abused branch of the Legislature to which I belong. Let me say further that there are items in the Liberal policy of social reform, as vaguely sketched by the Prime Minister and his colleagues, with which I entirely sympathise, and which the Unionist party, if returned to power, would be bound, just as much as their political opponents, to devote attention to. I will refer to only one. I am entirely in sympathy with the view which, I believe, the Chancellor of the Exchequer first picked up during his recent visit to Germany—that it is necessary and desirable to provide, by a system of voluntary contributions, with State aid, for insurance not only against old age but against accident and sickness and unemployment. There is a vast field for measures of social reform, a field in which Unionists are prepared, as they always have been, to meet the Liberals with open hands, and to co-operate with them in forwarding any such measures really designed to promote the national interest. But what chance have such good measures of social reform in the scramble with which we are threatened, the scramble of all these minorities to pass their several pet measures of destruction in advance of their fellows? Social reform, it is said, is imperilled by the House of Lords, but some of

the greatest social reformers who have ever lived in this country have belonged to that assembly, and have found the most profitable field for their activity there. I defy you to show where the House of Lords has stood in the way of good social legislation within the course of the last Parliament. But I ask you, as men of sense, if we are going to plunge into these great and embittered controversies which the victory of the Liberal party would initiate, if we are going to put the whole of our Constitution into the melting-pot, if we are going to enter on a struggle on questions like Home Rule, on questions like the crippling and reducing to impotence of the House of Lords, on questions like secular education, the disestablishment of the Church, and all the rest of these measures which fill up the Radical programme, what ghost of a chance is there that people will have the time or the temper to deal effectively with sound measures of social reform which are not of a party character ?

I want seriously to ask you whether you think that this is a time in the history of this nation when it is suitable to plunge the country into a whole series of constitutional struggles of a most distracting and disorganising kind ? That is the last direction in which, under present circumstances, our energies ought to be employed. Let me ask you to put aside for a moment all party considerations and look at the position. If those who laugh at that remark will hear me out, I think they will feel the laugh was unjustified. I can assure them that, if they are incapable of looking at our national position apart from party considerations, I do not feel the same difficulty. I have spent a great part of my life in the impartial service of the State and of ministers of both parties in the State, in the service not of one party but of my sovereign and my country, and though I am for the time being a party man—and I do not pretend that I am not exposed to the temptations to which every party man is exposed—I still think that my old experience and my old traditions enable me to separate party from national considerations. It is in no

party spirit that I ask you to try, if only for five minutes, to look at the position of this nation and Empire as it will be seen by the impartial historian of the future, as it is seen even to-day by the critical and unbiassed foreign observer. The position of the country at this moment is a grave position. I do not want to exaggerate ; I have never been one of the scaremongers, and I have never represented to my fellow-countrymen that we are in danger of a sudden, a deliberate, and a dastardly attack on the part of some foreign Power, of a foreign Power suddenly springing on us without giving us any notice. I have never given the slightest encouragement to ideas such as that, but I do say we have to look with all seriousness and gravity at the position of this country in the world at the present time, irrespective of temporary scares, irrespective, perhaps, of any particular immediate danger. We ought to look at our position in the world in respect to the permanent forces that are at work, dangers and difficulties which are not confined to a particular season, which are not confined to a particular year, but which are always there and which are growing. What are the simple facts of the situation ? The great position which we have occupied in the world for more than a century, the great position won for us by the enterprise, the sacrifices, the industry, the courage of our forefathers, we still hold, but it is being more and more menaced every day. It is menaced in respect of our material strength in the matter of armaments ; it is menaced, I might almost say it is being undermined, in the field of industry and commerce. You all know that the supremacy, the undoubted supremacy, which we at one time possessed at sea, though it has not gone, is certainly challenged. Now that our supremacy at sea is challenged, we can no longer regard with our old easy indifference the fact that as a land Power we are the weakest of all the great Powers of Europe, that we rank as a land Power, if indeed we rank, with Belgium or Bulgaria, not with Germany or France, or Russia, or even Italy. When people consider our tremendous responsibilities, the burden of the defence of our enormous

Empire, these growing responsibilities and this growing burden, they are sometimes apt, even though they be good patriots, to take rather a hopeless view of the future.

But the position is not hopeless. It is full of promise of almost unimaginable greatness and perfect security, but only if we are able to bring to the solution of the problem not merely the energies and resources of the people of the United Kingdom, which are still enormous, though not capable of indefinite expansion, but the energies and resources of the whole Empire, and especially of the younger nations in the Empire, with their boundless opportunities of development, in population, industry, and wealth. If we can only stand before the world as a union of free nations, there is nothing which we need fear. That is the greatest question before the people of this country to-day, the question of the organisation of the Empire. Compared with it, all our local controversies—excepting the question of maintaining the health, the physical, mental, and moral capacity, and the industrial power of the people of these islands, which also is of the heart and essence of Imperialism—sink into absolute insignificance. But what trace of recognition of the importance of this Imperial question do you find in the programme or speeches of the present holders of power? None. I am going to make a non-party remark. I am afraid I shall never make a good partisan. I am not sure that I ought not to be shut up during a General Election—but I cannot pretend that even the Unionist party has always been penetrated as fully as I should wish to see it penetrated by the importance and the urgency of Imperial unity and consolidation. But they do, at least, care about it. They do at least realise it, though perhaps they only realise it dimly.

But their inspiring genius, Mr. Chamberlain, realised not dimly but clearly, on what road our national salvation lies. The Unionist party do include as an essential and a foremost part of their constructive policy measures, fiscal in the first instance, but in their import and consequences far more than fiscal, which are directed not to pulling down

but to building up—to laying at any rate the foundation of an effective union between the scattered parts of the loosely compacted Dominions of our King. The policy of the Unionist party is at least a constructive, a remedial, a national, and an Imperial policy. Alike for the aims it pursues and the evils it is calculated to avert, alike for what it promises and what it seeks to resist, it deserves the united support of all moderate and patriotic men.

## CARDIFF.—DECEMBER 23, 1909

### *Two Conflicting Policies*

[This speech, which was delivered at an Election Meeting amid a constant fire of interruptions, is reproduced from the best available report.]

AFTER the deluge of oratory which has swept over the country during the last three weeks, I suppose we are all looking forward to our Christmas holidays. A week from now we shall all be at it again, hammer and tongs, but I do not think that very much new matter will be added to the controversy. What people have got to do now is to think out quietly for themselves the case which is being presented to them in every possible light; the truce of the next few days may give them a good opportunity. I am not going to attempt to confuse your minds by introducing any new features into the discussion to-night. What I propose to do is in quite simple language to try and restate the case, of course from my own point of view, and to disentangle it from the secondary and often wholly irrelevant considerations which are introduced in order to create prejudice.

What really matters is that the people of this country should consider and decide between two conflicting and sharply contrasted policies, contrasted in the first instance with respect to the question of finance. There are many other issues involved, but I suppose nobody will deny that it is a sharp conflict of opinion between the financial proposals of the Government and the first constructive policy

of the Unionist party which has brought things to a head. A great clamour has been raised against the House of Lords for having forced the submission of these questions to the choice of the country; vituperation against the House of Lords has become, more than ever before, the great staple of Radical oratory; but if our opponents are so sure that their views are yours, why should they be angry for having the opportunity given to them of proving it? The more they try to make the election turn upon the action and the character of the House of Lords—and I am perfectly prepared to defend both—the more they import the personal element into the discussion, the clearer it will be to every man, that they are not too keen to discuss the merits of the case which the House of Lords have forced them to put to the arbitrament of the nation. It is the policy of the Government which is on its trial. The House of Lords have appealed against that policy to the people. That being the case, what the Government and its supporters have got to do is to defend their policy before the jury of the people. It is no use abusing the Peers. The more they do that, the more impartial observers will be inclined to think that their case is a weak one, and that they have no confidence in the justice of their cause. And it would be surprising if they had any. The cause they have to defend is, in my judgment, anything but an inspiriting one. They have to defend their own financial measures, which are not only bad in themselves but intended to block the way to a great and necessary change in our fiscal policy, which will do something more than provide us with the revenue that we require.

By that I mean a policy of Tariff Reform. The choice is not between one tax and another tax; it is not merely between one set of taxes and another set of taxes. The choice lies between a set of taxes, which will only produce so much revenue, and a system which will produce that revenue and, I believe, will produce more, but of which the revenue-producing effect is not the principal or the only effect. Tariff Reform, besides the revenue which it would

produce—a revenue fully equal at any rate to our present needs—would stimulate home industries, and would increase the national output. It would mean not only more revenue for the Exchequer, but more production and more work. This is what constitutes the main difference and contrast between our policy and the policy of the Government. I say even if we take their financial measures at the best—I do not know why we should treat them with such favourable consideration—if we examine each item carefully, we find that this collection of taxes with which the Chancellor of the Exchequer has favoured us, are no ordinary taxes. To prove that, no doubt I should have to deliver a course of lectures, and I observe that some of my audience would not be much inclined to listen to them. And yet, I am not sure that they might not do worse. I have spent about fifteen years of my life in public finance. I was for four years head of one of the greatest British revenue departments ; I served under two Chancellors, one Liberal and one Unionist, and I believe I had the complete confidence of both. I dare say my lectures on the subject might be rather dull and tiresome, but I believe they would reveal some slight knowledge of these matters—a knowledge perhaps even equal to that of the gentlemen who interrupted me.

I am going to sum up, without entering into details, my objections to these fiscal proposals in one or two sentences; but before I do, perhaps you will allow me to make one personal remark. The air is thick with personalities just now in Wales—and perhaps you think I have caught the contagion. Don't be alarmed ; I am not going to abuse anybody, and perhaps you will understand why not, when I say that the only person to whom I am going to refer, and that but for a moment, is my humble self. It is a favourite amusement of our political opponents to represent the opposition to the Budget as an interested opposition. 'It is an interested opposition, an opposition of the wealthy, and especially of the landowning class, who want to save their pockets.' I have given reasons before now, and I

think they are sound reasons, for regarding that as a gross libel on my wealthier fellow-countrymen. But if this is any other man's motive for opposition to the Budget, it certainly is not mine. I am not a man who started life possessed of the advantages of birth. I do not despise those advantages; I do not grudge them to any man; I think this country gets good value for its men of hereditary wealth. I do not grudge any man those advantages; but at any rate those advantages have not been mine. I was not born with a gold spoon in my mouth; I have not got one now. In a long life of unceasing hard work, the best of it spent in the service of the State, I have obtained no more for myself than just a competence. I can afford to snap my fingers in the face of the Budget, except, perhaps, at the increased income-tax, which is just the one tax of all the twenty I least object to, and yet if any man in the House of Lords or in the country is opposed to the Budget with absolute conviction, I am the man. I am opposed to it, not as an hereditary legislator, which I am not; I am opposed to it, not as a wealthy man, which I am not; but I am opposed to it as a man who has had twenty years' experience of public finance. I say it involves this country in a vast amount of expense and friction. It has already hopelessly deranged one of the greatest of our trades. If it has not done that in Cardiff, I know many parts of the country where it has. The friction and unsettlement already caused by the Budget are entirely out of proportion to the amount of revenue we are going to derive from it.

It is going to hit all classes dependent on industry, and especially the wage-earning classes. Yes, it is going to hit them hard in two ways—by increased charges on many articles of common consumption, and even more seriously by checking enterprise and diminishing employment. I have quoted before more than once, and I quote again, the admission made and the argument used by our political opponents, under different circumstances from the present, with regard to the effect of taxes like those which form so great a feature of the present Budget proposals, when

they said and reiterated, that it was a mistake to suppose that, because taxes were paid by the rich, they were only felt by the rich. That was the argument of our political opponents themselves a few years ago. It is a great mistake to suppose—that was their contention—that taxes paid by the rich are only felt by the rich. They all mean diminution of employment; many people whom the wealthy used to employ are thrown out of work. And all these disturbances for what? I will tell you. It is in order to turn away the minds of men from the true remedy, or at any rate from what is an essential part of the true remedy, for distress, for unemployment, and for irregular employment, and that is to do ourselves the work we are at present paying foreigners to do for us. Our opponents say that goods are paid for by goods. Quite true, but that does not mean—now, follow this argument—either that we pay the foreigner for goods, which we unnecessarily derive from him, by goods made in this country, or that, in so far as we do so pay for them, it is any advantage to us. The interest on our investments abroad should come to us in the form of goods. But what actually happens in many cases is, that we pay for the manufactured articles which we buy from the foreigner by diverting to foreign countries a portion of the goods which represent that interest, and which would otherwise come to this country to be consumed in this country. And even in so far as we pay for these manufactured articles which we buy from abroad and which we might produce at home—even in so far as we pay for them by goods produced here, that does not mean that there is more work done here. Those goods would equally have to be paid for if they were produced by British hands on British soil, and there would then be two sets of British workmen employed instead of one.

A gentleman says to me—'What about shipping?' I have shown that the effect of a tariff is generally advantageous to home industry. If it were true that the effect of a tariff is to diminish the imports and exports of

a country, it is possible that a single industry—the industry referred to, I mean the shipping industry—might suffer. Even in that case I should say it was a question whether the interests of one industry should be set against those of the whole industrial community. But I firmly maintain that the interests of shipping would not suffer in the least. It is not the effect of a tariff to diminish the amount of the foreign trade of the country. How can anybody contend that it is so? It is contrary to the experience of a number of foreign countries and, above all, of Germany. It is not the effect of a tariff to diminish the foreign trade of a country, but to alter its character. There may, no doubt, be a diminution in the importation of manufactured goods or partly manufactured goods, but for that very reason there is a corresponding increase in the importation of the raw material which is needed to make the finished articles which the tariff tends to exclude. I do not think our friends have gained much by their interruptions about shipping. Not that I object to any reasonable interruption on this subject, for I am prepared to discuss any fair point.

Let us export our surplus products to pay for something which we cannot produce at home, and not for something which we can. There are surely enough things which we are bound to buy from abroad, and which we have no option about whatever—hundreds of millions worth of food and of raw materials which are necessary for our own industries. Let us keep our surplus products to pay for these things, and not swell the balance against us by importing goods which we can make at home. And even if we do choose to import a certain number of goods which we could produce in this country—and I fully admit that under any fiscal system we shall do so to some extent—even if such goods continue to be imported, why should we especially encourage that practice? If a foreigner wants to come into our markets he might at least pay a market toll. He might at least pay something for the upkeep of them. It costs enough, in all conscience, to keep up the great em-

porium of this country for the traders of all the world. Why should British sellers be the only sellers in the market who have to pay anything to maintain it ? Now, are these the arguments of a rich man seeking to escape taxation ? They are the arguments of a man trying to open the eyes of his fellow-countrymen—and especially of his wage-earning fellow-countrymen who are most interested in this question—to the direction in which their true interest lies. People's eyes are being opened. These facts about trade and industry are becoming more generally realised every day. The people are beginning to see through the sophistries and abstract propositions which the experience of every country in the world that has ever adopted a tariff, which the experience of our own Dominions, has exploded—those abstract propositions by which they were formerly befoozled—and that is the reason which has led to the financial proposals of the Government.

I do not deny—and I am sure this will be a welcome remark to some of my audience who do not agree with me —I do not deny that the effect of the Budget proposals, for a time at any rate, is to give a certain advantage to the Government. A year or so ago, when elections were being fought on the Tariff Reform issue alone, the Government could not retain a single seat. Therefore it was highly necessary to introduce something which would divert public attention from the consideration of this question of Tariff Reform, which was proving so fatal to the Government. And I fully admit that the discussion of the financial proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer achieved that object for a time. I think the effect is beginning to wear off a little, for the Budget was not apparently of much use at Bermondsey. Indeed the Government do not seem to have much confidence even at Portsmouth, otherwise there would not have been an unaccountable delay in the issue of a writ for that constituency. The taxes with which the Government propose to oppress us are bad in various degrees ; in one respect they are all bad, because they are all, at present at any rate, wholly

unnecessary. You could raise the same amount of money by moderate import duties. You could raise the same amount of money by a tax on foreign manufactured articles imported into this country, not only without loss to the people of this country, but with absolute advantage to them. I know perfectly well that people are going about the country making fantastic calculations as to the amount which would be derived, or which would not be derived, from a duty on foreign imported articles. I am not going to-night—for I may have another occasion of doing so—to pursue in detail the question of the yield of this or that particular duty, but I would just ask you to consider this, for a pound of fact is worth a bushel of theory. If it is possible for the Germans to raise seven millions by taxes on imported articles, which are just half the amount of the manufactures imported into this country, I would ask any arithmetician to tell me why there is a practical impossibility of our raising fourteen millions. I say, therefore, the Budget taxes are bad because they are unnecessary. Some of them may not be so bad in themselves—taxes such as the increased Income Tax, and, if you like, the Super-Tax—they may not be so bad in themselves, and we may some day have recourse to them. But they are not going to run away; they will be there for us to have recourse to if necessary, and not only will they be there, but they will be much more productive, if in the interval we adopt a fiscal system which will increase the resources of the country, out of which alone all internal taxation must come.

Indeed it is evident that the Budget, which was intended to oust Tariff Reform, is not now relied upon by its own authors as alone sufficient to effect that object. They have got to hold out other and more sinister inducements in order to get the necessary majority together. They have capitulated to the Irish Separatists; they are walking shoulder to shoulder with men who are not only hostile to all property, but are what is even worse—hostile to all forms of National Defence. I do not say that all supporters of the Government are hostile to National Defence, but I

say the Government are walking shoulder to shoulder with the men who are. I repeat, that whatever may be the opinions of many supporters of the Government, the Government party as a whole is accepting and welcoming the alliance of men who have denounced all forms of National Defence. I will not say anything with regard to those minor sops, which are thrown out in order to capture first one and then another section of what the Government hope will be their supporters—the promised fresh attack upon the Church schools and the settlement of 1902, which I believe has worked perfectly well; the fresh attack upon the licensed trade; nor am I going to dwell upon the attempt, the barefaced attempt, which is to be made to alter the electoral system of this country in the exclusive interests of the Radical party. We hear a great deal about 'One man, one vote,' the alleged injustice of a man having votes in different places. We do not hear so much about 'One vote, one value,' the injustice of giving five Irish constituencies with about 4000 voters each at the outside as much power as the city of Cardiff with 20,000. Certainly one of the most objectionable features of the programme announced by the Prime Minister is the proposal to gerrymander the Constitution by partial alterations of the electoral system, remedying the inequalities which tell against one party while maintaining the inequalities which tell against the other.

With these allies and these objects it is not surprising that the Radical party should have put down as the first article of their political programme what is virtually the establishment of Single Chamber government—the autocratic power of the House of Commons. It is the foundation of their whole policy. To each of the several aggressive groups whom they are conciliating, whom they propose to unite in a common policy of destruction—to each of these several groups in succession they have pointed out, that unless the power of the House of Lords is in the first instance crippled, the execution of their programme is impossible. That is the meaning of all the artificial clamour

against the House of Lords for having thwarted, as it is alleged it has thwarted, the will of the people. The House of Lords has never resisted the will of the people, when it was once clearly and conclusively expressed. What it has done in some cases is to delay the passing of measures until the popular judgment on them was clearly pronounced. What it has done over and over again is to prevent the country being rushed, by a majority of the House of Commons, into measures with which the people of the country were not in sympathy. Twice over, in the memorable instance of Home Rule for Ireland, the Radical party has proved to be out of sympathy with the nation, and in one case it was only the intervention of the House of Lords which prevented it from carrying out its policy. I believe, for my own part, that, likewise with regard to the Education question, the action of the House of Lords—which did not reject the Education Bill but only amended it—was more in accord with the feeling of the majority of the people than was the action of the House of Commons. The power of the House of Lords, which is of most value, is the power of giving the nation an opportunity to show, whether or not the House of Commons in any particular instance is right in its often over-confident assertion that it represents the will of the nation.

We have been asked—I am not going to detain you but for a few moments—we have been asked, and asked by no less a person than Lord Rosebery, of whom I think all his fellow-countrymen, whether they agree or not with all his opinions, should speak and think with respect—we have been asked what is the attitude of the Unionist party with regard to the reform of the House of Lords. Well, I have no claim myself to speak for the Unionist party as a whole. I am a free-lance, fighting on the side of the Unionist party, and fighting hard for the cause of Tariff Reform and Imperial Preference, for the unity of the Empire, for the defence of this country, and for practical social reforms. But I do not pretend to speak as a Unionist leader. What I should like to say, in answer

to that question, is that the proof of the pudding is in the eating. If Lord Rosebery, or anybody else, wishes to know what the attitude of the Unionist party to the reform of the House of Lords is, he surely has got the facts before him. A Unionist member of the House of Lords proposed and carried a motion on this subject, which was referred to a committee. That committee has reported, and the purport of their report is to alter the constitution of the House of Lords in two very material respects, and, from my own point of view, greatly to improve it. One feature of these proposals is a large reduction in the number of men sitting in the House of Lords by hereditary right, and the imposition of a test, by which those who do sit by hereditary right shall only do so after having proved their qualification by public service. Another feature of these proposals is the addition to the House of Lords of a large number of life peers, whose introduction is intended to give it a more representative character. That is a policy emanating from the Unionists, supported by the Unionists, and brought to the stage which it has already reached by the Unionists. I have heard no criticism, no hostile criticism, of this policy from any quarter in the Unionist party. On the contrary, the only comment I have heard upon it from Unionist quarters is the suggestion that it might be carried, as personally I think it ought to be carried, even farther. But what has been the attitude of the Government toward these proposals? They have boycotted the whole thing from the very start. Let this be clearly understood. It cannot be denied by any man that it is the Unionist party which is in favour of the reform of the House of Lords. It is the Radical party which wishes to keep in existence an unreformed House of Lords—provided that that House can be reduced to impotence. One of the very first items, in my opinion, which would necessarily find a place in the programme of any Unionist Government, would be an alteration in the constitution of the House of Lords, calculated to enable it to exercise powers, which it is in the highest interest

of the nation that it should be free to exercise, without being exposed to the vilification and abuse, and to the misconstruction, to which it is now so easily exposed in every discharge of its duty. That is a reform which would have to find a place in the programme of a Unionist Government when first returned to power.

There are other measures with which you are familiar, which would also find a place in that programme. I am not going to dwell upon them now, except just to mention in conclusion what are the chief of them. First and foremost stands the policy of Tariff Reform and Imperial Preference. But the Unionist party is also pledged, and deeply pledged, to the adequate defence of the country under all circumstances, and especially to maintaining the unquestionable supremacy of our Fleet, not going to sleep about it, not turning a deaf ear to warnings that other countries are silently gaining upon us in their preparations, in the number of their ships and in the materials for their construction—not turning a deaf ear to those warnings for years, and then suddenly bursting into spasmodic activity in all the dockyards just on the eve of a General Election. No, but going on steadily year by year without somnolence, without neglect, and keeping our ships, our armaments, and our power of producing ships and armaments always well in advance of those of our only dangerous rivals.

I would say one word also, though I am not at present speaking in an agricultural constituency, in favour of the policy of the rehabilitation of agriculture, the greatest of all our industries, and that which has been most grossly sacrificed by our fiscal legislation in the past. The leader of the Unionist party has declared in favour of an increase in the number of the owners of land. But it is not sufficient to increase the number of owners of land, unless we increase the opportunities of making a living out of the land, and that is not to be done by one sensational measure. It can only be done by a policy steadily pursued throughout years, and consisting of a number of well-

considered and related measures. You may well ask why hundreds of millions should be spent in enabling the Irish tenant to buy land, compulsorily if need be, from his landlord, when not one million is spent in this country to enable tenants—even where they are willing to buy and landlords are willing to sell—to purchase their holdings. You may well ask why the principle of assisting the voluntary transfer of land from landlord to tenant should not be adopted in the United Kingdom. That is only one thing. There are other measures which would be necessary. If the small owner is to succeed, he will need to be helped in the matter of the formation of co-operative societies, as he is helped in many foreign countries. He will need to be helped also by the creation of land banks enabling him to obtain credit on easy terms. Such banks are the standby and salvation of the small owner in many foreign countries I have visited. It is just this sort of practical measure, which perhaps does not appeal very much to crowded audiences, and is sometimes the scoff of ignorant politicians, that is the very essence of good government and of real social reform. I say that there are measures of this kind—a whole series of them—which will be necessary, if the Unionist policy of increasing the number of holders of land, and of small holders, is to be a success.

And, lastly, the Unionist policy has to take account of all those necessities of social reform which are common ground, as far as their aim is concerned, for both political parties. I do not deny that on many of these questions—questions of housing, of sweating, of insurance against accidents and sickness—there is a large measure of agreement between us and our opponents. The Unionist party will have to prove its capacity to deal with these questions, and it will have two great advantages in dealing with them. The first of these is that it is not committed to a series of violent constitutional changes, which are inevitably destined to push the quiet consideration of these vital social questions for the time being off the board. What chance is

there for them, if we are to be involved during the next few years in bitter constitutional struggles over the question of the Union, the question of the Second Chamber, or the question of the Establishment of the Church? That is one advantage which the Unionist party possesses, and there is another and even more fundamental one, and that is, that it has a free hand to employ remedies which go to the root of the social evils, of which the Poor Law, and other laws affecting the condition of the masses of the people, are only palliatives. The root trouble is the prevalence of so much poverty, of so much unemployment, and increasing unemployment. You can try to deal with these evils by various means. You can do so by labour registries, you can do so by insurance, you can do so by legislation against sweating. But all such measures, though they minimise the evils, do not go to the root of them. At the root of them all lies the problem of employment. It is a question of your national output and your national trade. The real remedy lies in a policy directed to the development of national production, to the maintenance of our national trade, to obtaining fair play for our trade in the competition of the markets of the world. Yes, that goes to the root, and until you approach the matter from that point of view, all your other minor reforms, however useful—I do not deny that they may be useful in their way—will always be like pouring sand into a sieve, like pouring water into a vessel which has a hole at the bottom of it. Our policy is to stop the hole; our policy is to aim at two great things. One is to preserve for British hands and British brains the *maximum* of productive work in our own country, and the other is to secure for British exports the greatest and the surest of the future markets of the world, the market of our own Dominions.

## LONDON.—APRIL 28, 1910

### *Imperial Organisation*

[In presiding at a dinner of the Compatriots Club.

BEFORE touching on those wider considerations which the toast suggests, I should like to say a few words about the Club. I think we may take a modest pride in the fact that the late election has increased the number of members of the Club, who are also members of the House of Commons, from eighteen to thirty-six. And we note with even greater pleasure that of the new members of that assembly who have already made their mark, on the Unionist side, a very large proportion are Compatriots. I believe the Club in its short life has already exercised a considerable influence upon political opinion in this country, but nothing to what I hope to see it exercise in the future. A great deal depends upon that, on the permeation of the Unionist party, and perhaps in time of other parties also, by the political ideas which are distinctive of, I will not say exclusively peculiar to, this association. I do not know that, to be a Compatriot, a man must necessarily be a Unionist in the narrower party sense, although at the present time, in view of certain tendencies which are dominant in the other political parties, this is perhaps the only course open to him. But I do feel convinced that the future of Unionism, alike from the lower point of view of electoral success, and from the higher point of view of national usefulness, is bound up with its fidelity to those principles which we Compatriots are banded together to promote. To put it quite simply, Unionists can never afford to forget that they are the party of Imperial as well as national unity. They cannot afford, even when the local controversies of this United Kingdom are raging most fiercely, to let themselves be wholly absorbed by them, or to lose sight of those broader and world-wide interests of the Empire and the race, which are of such vital though often unrecognised importance to the people of these islands, and not least to the toiling millions who

may not be giving them a thought. It is the business of men, who are in a position to think for them, to keep those momentous issues steadily to the front.

Just now it is not perhaps very easy to do it. We are plunged in a controversy, not unimportant certainly, but thoroughly unprofitable, which distracts—as it was intended to distract—attention from the constructive policy of Imperial consolidation and social reform, of which, by a long-sustained effort, we had just begun to make people realise the necessity and the value. The old manœuvre of tinkering the political machine, in order to prevent anything useful being done with it, has once more been resorted to, not without considerable temporary effect. Energies which are sorely needed for work of positive and constructive value have perforce to be diverted to the defence of our fundamental institutions against unscrupulous attack. I shall have something to say presently about the needlessness of the present embittered quarrel. But let me dwell first for a few minutes upon an aspect of it which is sometimes forgotten—I mean, its Imperial aspect. Can any one find in the arguments and the policy of those who are engaged in trying to destroy the House of Lords, the slightest recognition of, the slightest interest in, the effect of such a revolution upon the British Parliament, as the central organ of a great Imperial system? The only thing they see in it, the only thing they care about, is its effect on the relations of British parties, upon the domestic politics of the United Kingdom. And I for one should be heartily glad if nothing else was involved. It is a terrible defect of the constitution of this Empire, that one and the same assembly, the Parliament at Westminster, has not only to deal with all the local affairs of these islands, but with Defence, with Foreign Affairs, with India, with our relations with the self-governing Dominions, and with their relations with one another and the outside world. But, however regrettable, that is the actual position of affairs. With the best of luck it will take years of effort, of constructive not destructive statesmanship,

to alter it, and in the meantime we cannot afford to let that Parliament be rendered more inefficient than it already is for one great branch of its work.

I am not indeed one of those who think it can be rendered more efficient by importing new elements into it from outside. It is no doubt an attractive proposal, at first sight, that the occasion of a change in the constitution of the House of Lords should be used to give some representation at Westminster to the over-sea Dominions. It is an attractive idea, but in my humble opinion it is not at all a sound one. That is the wrong line of development. If, as I fervently hope, the present loose association of the self-governing states of the Empire grows in time into a regular partnership, it can only be, as it seems to me, by the development of a new organ of government representative of them all, and dealing exclusively with matters of common interest. It would only heighten confusion to bring representatives of the Dominions into the House of Commons. And if, as I think every one would admit, it is impracticable to bring them into the House of Commons, they would certainly say 'Thank you for nothing' if we were to offer them a few seats in the House of Lords. But while our so-called Imperial Parliament is not and cannot be, in any true sense, representative of the whole Empire, it does in the present chaotic state of our Imperial organisation constantly deal with Imperial affairs. Imperfect instrument as it is for work of this character, do you think it would be better if it consisted only of the House of Commons? With all respect for that assembly, I think it would be infinitely worse. I have no wish to draw comparisons between the two Houses. My argument involves no disparagement of the House of Commons. All I say is that, in dealing with the whole range of Imperial questions, Parliament would be immensely weakened by the loss of what the House of Lords is able to contribute to the decision, and even more to the discussion, of them. The weight of authority, and I do not mean only official experience, which many members of the House of Lords

can bring to bear on questions of Defence, of Foreign Policy, of the affairs of the Dominions and Dependencies, is really impressive. There is nothing equal to it in the House of Commons. On the other hand, it detracts in no conceivable manner from the legitimate influence of the House of Commons. Why should the country throw such an asset away ? You may say that under a different system the best men in the Lords would find seats in the House of Commons. And some of them, no doubt, might, but many would not. Nor does it follow that they would be equally useful there. Membership of the House of Commons is a career in itself. It needs years of special training. Moreover, in the House of Commons such men would necessarily be much more in the grip of party. That is the greatest weakness of the House of Commons in dealing with these great questions, into which our party differences ought never to be allowed to enter. In the House of Lords the party whip can never be cracked with the same efficacy, and with regard to questions of this character it cannot be cracked at all. On such occasions it is only broad national considerations which can be urged with effect in that assembly. Mere party recrimination, though I do not say it is not sometimes made, is certain to fall dead flat. In the controversy which is at present occupying so much attention, there is this point of first-rate importance which it would be dangerous to overlook—I mean, the necessity of preserving in the Second Chamber, at any rate as long as the Parliament of the United Kingdom is still so largely responsible for Imperial affairs, the capacity, and the inclination, to deal with those affairs in a national and not a party spirit. Observe that this is not a high Tory argument for leaving things exactly as they are. If I have dwelt on certain aspects of the House of Lords in which it is an almost ideal Second Chamber, I do not ignore that there are defects in the constitution of that assembly which I believe all reasonable men would like to remedy. Be it admitted, that for purposes of domestic legislation the House of Lords, while possessing in this field also many

and great merits, does suffer from not being sufficiently representative, not sufficiently in touch with all sides of the national life. There is too great a preponderance of one political party and one social class. The problem is how to strengthen the House by the introduction of new elements, without sacrificing what is precious and irreplaceable in its character and traditions. A difficult problem, no doubt, but surely not insoluble, if it were approached with some regard for permanent national interests and not in the spirit of the narrowest and most short-sighted partisanship. The way of dealing with the question which the Government has so far chosen to adopt, or rather which it has been pushed and dragged and kicked into adopting, is absolutely hopeless. There is not a suggestion, not a glimmer of a statesmanlike solution, nothing but a violent temporary expedient, dictated by the desire of keeping a number of discordant factions in one yoke for another year or two. Admitting, to start with, that a Second Chamber is a national necessity, they yet propose to reduce the existing Second Chamber to an absurdity, while deferring the final settlement of the question to the Greek Kalends. Such a policy carries its condemnation on its face, but worse than the policy itself is the method by which it is sought to ram it down the throat of the nation. If there is one thing certain, it is that you cannot alter the fundamental institutions of any country without a decisive and a continuous preponderance of public opinion in favour of the alteration. No slight casual majority can possibly suffice. A bare majority may be enough to change a Government or to pass a law of ordinary importance. But where it is a question of a radical reconstruction of the whole political system, one half of the nation simply is not strong enough to force a one-sided settlement upon the other half. As was well said the other day by an able writer who calls himself 'Historicus,' 'Neither this country nor any country I ever heard of has allowed its constitution to be fundamentally altered by a bare majority of votes.' In a matter of vital and con-

tinuing importance such as this, the beaten party would simply not accept the settlement. What a bare majority on the one side did to-day, a bare majority on the other would undo to-morrow, and so we might go on disestablishing and re-establishing our Second Chamber until we ended by fighting over it. The whole conception is childish. Every rational man must see that this is a position in which neither party can have its whole will, and that the attempt to base a revolution upon a slight, a peculiarly insecure, preponderance of voting power is foredoomed to failure. And the irony of the situation is that there is no real reason at all why, over this question of all others, the nation need be divided into two hostile and almost equal camps, engaged in a ' pull devil, pull baker ' struggle to get the mastery of one another. This, our usual method, may be all very well for the settlement of ordinary political differences within the constitution, but when you come to altering the constitution itself, it is quite unsuitable. Moreover, this method of dealing with the matter, however dear to the wire-pullers, is, I am firmly convinced, contrary to the real wishes and just instincts of the nation. There is no genuine division of opinion at all corresponding to the factitious lines of party cleavage. Of the forces at present being led against the House of Lords, the majority do not in the least want Single Chamber government, although it is that and nothing else which they are being made use of to establish. Of the forces rallying to the defence of the House of Lords the majority are not in the least opposed to a reform of that House; on the contrary, they would positively prefer to see its composition modified and the extent of its powers more clearly defined. There are all the elements here for a settlement by agreement, like that which terminated the constitutional crisis of 1884-5, and in a case of this kind it is only a settlement by agreement which can be either a satisfactory or a lasting settlement. Why then is this poor British nation not to be allowed to settle its constitutional difficulties in the only rational and practical way? The reason is discreditable to the

verge of absurdity. It is because a faction of the House of Commons, the numbers of which are grossly out of proportion to the forces behind them—for Ireland is greatly over-represented in any case, and Mr. Redmond and his followers are becoming daily less representative of Ireland—because, I say, this faction, which cares nothing and does not pretend to care about the general welfare of the United Kingdom, but pursues a purely sectarian object with the support of foreign paymasters, has ordained that there shall be a constitutional crisis of a character which every good citizen must deplore, and because a Ministry has been found weak enough, after interminable wrigglings, to capitulate to this preposterous demand. And so the whole nation is to be plunged into a bitter and prolonged struggle, which it does not want, to the detriment of vital interests at home and abroad already too long neglected, in order that the constitution of the country may be not reformed, not remodelled on any rational plan, but just roughly mutilated in that particular manner which suits the immediate necessities of Mr. Redmond and his followers. The improved Second Chamber, which the Ministry themselves declare to be necessary for the United Kingdom, can wait. But to enable the next Parliament to pass a Home Rule Bill without having to submit it to the nation is a matter of urgency. Yes; and how many other Bills which different sections of the composite majority are anxious to smuggle through without the nation being allowed to say whether it wants them or not? This is indeed a splendid illustration of the beauties of Single Chamber government. The whole point of that system is that, if you have, by whatever means, knocked up a majority in your Single Chamber, you can play ducks and drakes with every national interest without anybody being able to stop you. Here is a coalition of several parties, nominally three, but really more, for the Ministerial party proper comprises the most conflicting elements. Each of them has some pet measure or measures up its sleeve, measures which, on their merits, the country would never accept, and which at the next election their advocates will

take good care to keep as much as possible in the background. If they could only win the election and induce the nation to give up all control over its destinies for five years, these factions would at once begin to pull their pet measures out of their several wallets and to exchange acceptances, just as Mr. Redmond and his followers have now bartered support of a Budget which Ireland detests for the Prime Minister's promise to put pressure on the King, which I will do Mr. Asquith the justice to say that he detests. In opposition to this transparent chicanery, I believe that all the believers in really popular government will be solidly united. But I agree with my friend Mr. Oliver, that the number of people who care for constitutional principles, or even know what the word constitution means, though no doubt very large, is not large enough to ensure victory at a General Election. If the nation is to be saved from the wire-pullers, it is not on the constitutional issue alone that the battle must be fought.

In this company of all others it would be waste of time for me to discuss the strange suggestion, that the defence of the constitution might be promoted by shelving Tariff Reform. But for the high authority of the statesman from whom it emanated, enhanced as that authority is by the splendid fight he is at present making against Single Chamber despotism, nobody would have paid any attention to that advice. As it is, those who are fresh from the electoral struggle in the constituencies can be relied upon not to take it, for they certainly are not going to throw away the most powerful weapon in their whole armoury. Tariff Reform, as I conceive the situation, is the sword of Damocles always hanging over the head of the present Government. It is to divert men's minds from Tariff Reform that all the strategy of the Government for more than a year past has been designed, and for Unionists to allow Tariff Reform to fall into the background would be to play straight into the hands of their opponents. But in my opinion, there is no danger of that. What is more dangerous, more insidious, is the suggestion that, without

abandoning Tariff Reform altogether, the Unionist party might just quietly drop those portions of it which lend themselves most readily to misrepresentation. It is contended that if only we could get rid of the 'dear food' cry, our position would be much stronger. And I, for one, should be the last to deny that the 'dear food' cry, claptrap though it is, has been a great stumbling-block in the way of Tariff Reformers, and to some extent, though a constantly diminishing extent, may always remain a stumbling-block. If Tariff Reform had been confined to a proposal to tax foreign manufactured goods, I believe it would have swept the country long before now. But the question is at what cost would Tariff Reformers have gained that immediate victory? At the cost, it seems to me, of depriving their policy of its whole basis in principle, and of its chief value in the struggle for Imperial Unity. The proposal, as it seems to me, could only come, as in fact it does come, from those who have never heartily sympathised with Tariff Reform, because they have never understood it. To adopt that proposal would be to paralyse all the men whose strenuous advocacy has very nearly achieved victory already, and will surely achieve it in the future, because it is inspired by conviction, and by their grasp of a great and pregnant policy as a whole. In my humble opinion we have already gone quite far enough, perhaps too far, in sacrificing this or that item in our programme in order to disarm hostility, which is not in the least disarmed but only stimulated by such concessions. But we have not yet sacrificed anything that is vital, as we should do if we got away from the fundamental principle of fair play to the British producer all round, coupled with a preferential treatment of our fellow-countrymen across the seas, who have accorded a similar treatment to us, and who are prepared to bear, in an increasing degree, the burden of the common defence. And here let me say for the twentieth time, that we do not advocate the principle of Preference in order to buy the loyalty of the over-sea Dominions to the Empire. That is a pernicious

misunderstanding. There is no question of buying loyalty. The loyalty exists. It is the countries in which it exists and the people who feel it that we want to strengthen, as they want to strengthen us, by the development of closer commercial relations, with all that such relations carry with them. Speaking for myself, if we could only save Tariff Reform by sacrificing Preference, I should still no doubt be a Tariff Reformer, for I must in any case wish for fair play for the productive industries of this country, but the heart would have been taken out of my political endeavours. What keeps some of us going in the dreary waste of present day politics is the prospect of a better future, a future in which the great permanent interests of this nation and Empire will come by their own, and the factitious quarrels which now absorb so much of our energies will sink into comparative insignificance. Towards the realisation of that idea the great policy inaugurated by Mr. Chamberlain, not perfect in all its details certainly, but glorious in its breadth of view, and its patriotic intention, was the biggest step ever taken in our time. I am confident that all those whom I am addressing will adhere to the main outlines of that policy, until it has achieved, as it will achieve, a decisive victory.

## LIVERPOOL.—June 7, 1910

### *Crown Colonies*

[An address delivered before the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce.]

I assure you I regarded it as a great honour to be asked to deliver an address to this Chamber of Commerce. Inasmuch as I am expected and I desire to be brief, it may seem rather presumptuous of me to choose for my subject one so vast as that of the Crown Colonies, but I reflected that I should be addressing an audience, many of whom are familiar with that subject in its practical aspects, and therefore that I might take many things for granted, which before another audience it might have been necessary to explain at length. This Chamber has in recent years taken

a great, a growing, and, may I say, a most praiseworthy interest, in the administration of our Crown Colonies, and especially, perhaps, in that of West Africa, and it is in Africa, East and West, as I need not tell you, that the most remarkable developments of recent years have taken place—or perhaps I should say some of the most remarkable developments, for it is not right that any one speaking of Crown Colonies should overlook the great work which has been done by a distinguished band of British administrators in the Straits Settlements and the Malay Peninsula generally. Still, no doubt it is in East, West and Central Africa that the greatest developments have taken place in recent years. Not only have our boundaries been immensely extended, but there has been an even more remarkable expansion in our ideas as to the possibilities of these great territories and of our duties in regard to them. I may only refer in this connection to the establishment, first in London and then in Liverpool, of the Schools of Tropical Medicine, institutions which, I believe, are destined to bestow the greatest benefits not only on our own tropical possessions, but, I hope, on all mankind. I am far from saying that even now there is such a general interest in the Crown Colonies as we should wish to see, or that there is anything like an adequate appreciation, on the part of the public generally, of their vast extent or of their still vaster possibilities. But there is at any rate a great change for the better in our attitude with regard to them, a more progressive and liberal policy, and a growing tendency to regard them not as isolated and unimportant adjuncts of our Imperial heritage, but as destined to play a very essential part in its development as a whole. One idea especially with regard to them is, I think, as new as it is pregnant. It dates, with a great deal else which will in time to come be regarded as epoch-making, from the great colonial administration of Mr. Chamberlain. I refer to the conception of our Crown Colonies as complementary and indispensable to the other parts of the Empire from the economic point of view.

What appeals to many people who have no sentimental interest in the British Empire—a weakness to which I confess myself—is what an American friend of mine described as the conception of it as a business proposition. It seemed to him a very good business proposition, principally because there was hardly anything wanted by one part of it which some other part did not or could not supply. It was the self-supplying aspect of the Empire as a whole which appealed to him, as I think it will appeal more and more to all of us the more we think about it. In this aspect of the Empire the Crown Colonies have a very distinctive and very necessary rôle. Differing as they do in many respects from one another, they are all, broadly speaking, countries of the tropical or sub-tropical zones. The self-governing parts of the Empire, including, of course, the United Kingdom itself, are all, on the other hand, again broadly speaking, countries of the temperate zones, and they are also all countries which either have or which will have great industrial development. But most of the industries of the self-governing portions of the Empire, their present or future industries, are partially dependent, and some of the chief of them are wholly dependent—and this is certainly true of the United Kingdon itself—upon the products of tropical or sub-tropical zones. It is no small advantage at any time, and it may under given circumstances be vital, for a great industrial country to have the raw material, upon which its principal industries depend, produced within regions that are under its own control. This consideration, I would beg you to observe, is more important in the present, and is likely to be still more important in the future, than it has been in the past, and that because of the altered distribution of industries throughout the world. There are many forms of manufacture which at one time were confined to a single country, or to one or two countries, but which have now become common to a much greater number. Each of these countries is looking, in the first instance, to supply its own market. There is a general desire all round to do that, and conse-

quently there is much greater competition for raw material —as we all see at the present time in the case of rubber and of cotton. You may be sure the countries, which command the supply of the raw materials within their own borders, or under their own jurisdiction, will take very great care to satisfy their own requirements before they think of their neighbours. Therefore it is a matter of singular importance that we have within our own Empire, in India and also in the Crown Colonies, lands capable of supplying those natural products, upon which there is in the future, to use a common expression, likely to be the greatest run. India, no doubt, occupies a foremost position in this respect, although it must be remembered—and this greatly qualifies her importance from this point of view —that India herself is becoming an increasingly industrial country. But the Crown Colonies, including Protectorates such as East Africa, Northern Rhodesia, the Federated Malay States, and, last but not least, the Soudan, are already immensely important from the point of view to which I have called your attention, and they are destined to be very much more important in future years. They are enormous in extent; they are lands of immense fertility—not in all parts of them, but over great portions, and we have so far only scratched the surface of their natural resources. Interest in them is at present almost wholly confined to the United Kingdom itself; but the interest taken in them by other portions of the Empire, the self-governing portions of it, is bound to grow. Contiguity alone would ensure this, especially with the constantly growing rapidity of means of communication. Canada cannot be indifferent to the future of the West Indies, or South Africa to the future of Barotseland or Nyassaland, or Australia to the future of the islands of the Southern Pacific and of the states of the Malay Peninsula. But there is a more potent influence than contiguity which will tell in the coming years. The greater the industrial development of the self-governing Dominions, the more attention will they be bound to devote to great countries

under the British flag rich in those natural products, which are vital to the industries of the countries of the temperate zones.

From that point of view, it may be that the common interest of the self-governing portions of the Empire in the Crown Colonies will become one of the strongest links between the self-governing Dominions and the Mother Country, and between the self-governing Dominions amongst themselves. The perception of the great actual and the greater potential value of the Crown Colonies in the economic sphere has, I think, been the principal cause of the recent great change of policy with regard to them. Our step-motherly neglect of those colonies in the past has been one of the least honourable pages in our history. As acquirers of over-sea possessions we have been remarkably successful. No doubt that is due to the fact of our long-continued, unquestioned supremacy upon the ocean. As governors of their native populations we have, at any rate since the abolition of the slave trade, held a fairly high record for humanity. But in respect of their development we have been extraordinarily unenterprising. Our niggardliness, especially our governmental niggardliness, has become a byword. I think it has been due less to meanness than to want of imagination. For centuries we have confined ourselves to the islands and the coast strips, and have seen nothing in the Crown Colonies but opportunities of trade: a very valuable trade certainly in many cases, but trade restricted to the comparatively limited number of products, which they could easily furnish in their raw state, without any substantial assistance from our capital or our science. No doubt there is an important exception to that in the past in the sugar industry of the West Indian Islands, but I do not know that, taking it as a whole, we have any very great reason to be proud of the history of our dealings with these communities. But of late years there has been a remarkable awakening as to the possibilities of what has been called our great undeveloped estate. The centre of interest has shifted from the coast

strips to the great interior territories, and in place of the maintenance of a few penurious trading stations, we now see the beginning of a policy which aims, with European capital and by European science, at the development of these great territories, countries which supply some of the most valuable products of the earth in enormous quantities. Millions have been spent, and are being spent, upon railways in East Africa north of the Zambesi, in West Africa and in the Soudan, railways which, though it is said to-day of some of them that they don't pay for their axle-grease, will, I think, in time, and with the growth of population under conditions of peace and orderly government and of sanitary science, be unable to deal with the traffic they will be called upon to carry. I know there will be many mistakes, that many enterprises will fail, and that there will be loss of life and treasure. But the possibilities are so many and so various, the untapped resources of these great countries are so vast, that the experiments which will succeed will more than compensate for all the failures, and the ultimate reward of persistent energy will be something far greater than the boldest of us dream of to-day.

In conclusion, let me say that I think the time has come when, in view of the greatness of our stake and of our responsibility in this undeveloped estate, which has grown with such amazing rapidity, there is a call for more serious and systematic study of the conditions with which we have to deal, and for a more highly trained, expert administration. We have arrived at the end of the process of mere physical expansion; we cannot push our borders very much further forward in the centre of Africa, for instance, for the very good reason that we already march with the borders of other people. The era of expansion is over; the era of organisation is only just beginning. We do not want more territory. In truth it would not be good for us. We have an enormous work before us in making the best of the territories that we already possess. Despite all the novel interest excited in our Empire, and even in the Crown Colonies, the least regarded, though not the

least important, portion of it, no one can say we really yet realise the extent or the importance of the subject. Nothing strikes me more constantly, in what I may call the misdirection of national energy, than the extraordinary contrast between the amount of time and labour and ingenuity, and I may add temper, which is expended upon the least of our home political questions, compared with the plentiful lack of thought and energy devoted to even the biggest problems of Empire, and especially to the biggest problems of our Crown Colonies. How many writers on political subjects are there who have devoted themselves to anything like a thorough study of the administration of our tropical dependencies ? It is a big subject ; it is based on important principles like any other branch of administration, but yet a small library—I might say one shelf—would contain all the serious work that has ever been done on the subject. Some of that work is perfectly excellent, though it is comparatively little regarded. As yet only a small portion of the field has been covered. Such work, like all scientific work, naturally appeals only to a limited class. It will only have a few readers, though it is of the utmost value to the specialist. It does not pay. We have not yet soared to the conception that the country should pay for what is essential to the training of the men who are going to be its agents in these vast territories of which I have been speaking. Indeed, we have not any organised service as yet—no fully organised service at all such as we have and are proud of in India. They have made, and it is a very great credit to them, the beginning of such a service in the Anglo-Egyptian Soudan, but there is room for a great deal more to be done in that direction. I am afraid that the prospects we hold out are not sufficient to attract men of the necessary quality, although I am glad to think that we have had some very good men in our colonial service, and everything considered, the results of our administration have been better than might have been expected from the haphazard methods of selection. I suppose it is a question of money, and

though we are so much more liberal than we used to be, I do not think we are as yet anything like liberal enough in the conception of what is needed for the equipment of an undeveloped country, and in realising how much you must spend without immediate return, if you are going to make a real success of it in the long run.

The first plant of civilisation, if I may use a technical expression, is immensely costly in these new countries, and yet it is no use being miserly about it. I speak to you from experience. The biggest bit of work in Crown Colony government in our time was done in the new South African colonies immediately after the war. They were only temporarily Crown Colonies. We knew that they belonged essentially to colonies of the self-governing class. By virtue of their temperate climate and their European population, there was never any doubt that they had ultimately to take their places among the self-governing Dominions of the Empire. There was a brief but necessary period of Crown Colony administration, and during that time we drove the machine ahead at a most tremendous pace. I know we were often attacked for our extravagance; I myself was looked at askance by my friends, because of what were considered expensive fads—fads about experimental farms, bacteriological laboratories, afforestation, and bringing men of science—often receiving high salaries—from distant parts of the world to give a new impetus to agriculture. Many people used to laugh at the idea of the Transvaal ever becoming a serious agricultural proposition. I do not think they laugh at it in these days. But I am afraid to reveal to you the full extent of my heresy in these matters—my entire disbelief in the old doctrine, that it is the business of a Government to keep the peace and prevent people breaking one another's heads, but to leave all the rest to private enterprise. That may be a very good plan in old and wealthy countries, but it is absolutely fatal, it absolutely kills the chances of any rapid development in a new and raw country, which is totally devoid of what you may call the necessary equipment of civilisation. It

is only public effort and public money which can give it that necessary equipment. But I will not spoil your appetite for lunch by opening up a fresh vista of great public expenditure. I can only thank you for the patience with which you have listened to these necessarily rather general and, some of you may think, somewhat superficial remarks, and express my hope that you will persist, as a Chamber, in your excellent efforts to keep Governments, of whatever party, up to the mark in respect of their duty to the Crown Colonies of the Empire.

## CANTERBURY.—October 28, 1910

### *National Service—National Security*

[At a meeting of the Canterbury branch of the National Service League, the Dean of Canterbury presiding.]

A good deal of time is often spent at meetings like the present in insisting on the duty of every able-bodied man of military age to fight for the defence of his country in case of necessity, and therefore to undergo the training which is requisite to qualify him to fight efficiently. And I do not for one moment say that such insistence is idle or superfluous. But on this occasion, just by way of a change, I am not going to argue about this duty. I am going to assume that you recognise it. In my opinion, the great difficulty before the National Service League is not that of persuading people, in the abstract, of the duty of defending their country. The great difficulty is that of convincing them of the practical necessity, or rather, let me say, the practical utility of universal military training for that purpose. Let me put the argument, the only formidable argument, as it seems to me, which is ever brought against us. That argument—I will state it very broadly but, I hope, quite fairly—is this: Our country consists of islands, and of islands which, in respect of their food-supply, are not self-supporting. It therefore depends for its security, you may say for its existence, in case of war, upon the command of the sea. As long as

our Navy is supreme at sea, invasion, or at least invasion in great force, is impossible—therefore there is no occasion to have a large army to repel it. If, on the other hand, our Navy lost the command of the sea, then no degree of military strength would be of any avail, for we could be starved into submission. That is the argument, and, as I say, it is a formidable one, not only because there is some substance in it—it is not mere sentimentality or verbiage—but because it lends itself to very simple and effective statement.

By far the most damaging of all the criticisms directed against those who urge the necessity of a great increase of our military strength is that their efforts may have an injurious effect upon the strength of the Navy. There is, after all, a limit, it may be said, and truly said, to what we can do, to what any nation can do, however great its population and resources, in the way of preparation for war. If you are going in for a great increase of your military armaments, it must inevitably in the long run tend to diminish the extent of your naval armaments, and you will have developed the less essential of your defensive forces at the expense of the more essential. And I will admit at once that, if I believed that the demand for a greatly increased Army, and for the adoption of the principle of universal military training and service as the only means of getting it, was going to result in reducing our strength at sea, I should never raise my voice in support of that demand.

But I do not believe that it will have any such effect, but just the reverse. Let me try and explain to you why I think so, for that is the best way I know of unfolding the whole of our policy and answering, as far as I can, the argument which I have just put against myself, and which, I repeat, is the most formidable argument we have to face.

Undoubtedly the problem of National Defence must be looked at as a whole. It is not the strength of the Army by itself which is the vital point, nor yet the strength of

the Navy by itself, but their strength in conjunction. You may say that is a platitude, a truism, the most obvious thing in the world, yet in practice it is, like other truisms, often not sufficiently regarded. It is not sufficiently regarded, as it seems to me, by those who use that argument which I have just propounded. They seem to think that an increase in the strength of our Army would have no effect on our Navy, except indeed the possible bad effect of indirectly weakening it by a dissipation of our resources. But that is surely a fundamental fallacy. You may strengthen your Navy, directly, by adding to the number of your ships and your guns, but you may also strengthen it, indirectly, by relieving it of some of the burdens which at present it has to carry. If it is true, as I think I can show you, that we at present look to our naval forces to do work which is more properly the business of a land force, then, by transferring that work to a land force, we should be increasing the capacity of the Navy to discharge its own proper duties. The whole problem is, looking as I have said at National Defence as a whole, to determine in what proportion you should develop the one or the other side of it. No doubt the proper proportion will vary with the circumstances of each case. It will be different in the case of an island state, and in the case of a state which has land frontiers as well as a sea-board.

But in every case there must be a certain proportion. Sooner or later you will reach a point at which, however much you may have developed one of your fighting arms, you must, in the interest of your total strength—and even in the interest of that highly developed arm itself—look also to the development of the other. Nobody in his senses, however great the importance he assigns to the Navy, would contend that we could do altogether without an Army. And the question at any given time is whether, in the interest of National Defence as a whole, it is the Army or the Navy, or both, which more requires strengthening, and, if both, in what several degrees? There are many people who maintain to-day that our Navy, powerful

as it is, is still not powerful enough. I am not prepared to dispute it, but I do maintain that, however urgent may be the necessity of strengthening our fleet, the necessity of strengthening our land forces is at least equally urgent, and that it is so, not only for the sake of our security on land, but quite as much for the sake of our power at sea. Granted, as I for one am most amply prepared to grant, that sea power is vital for this country and Empire, I yet hold that for the maintenance of that sea power itself we require a more considerable degree of land power than we have at present got, and that we shall continue to run unconscionable risks until we provide it.

This is not, I think, the generally accepted view. Certainly it does not seem to be the official view. The official view, as far as it is possible to elicit it, would appear to be this: 'We need an Army, but not on the scale of the armies of Continental states, not even of small states such as Bulgaria and Roumania. For our Army exists, not for wars such as those in which Continental armies may be called upon to engage, but for the defence of our over-sea possessions, and of course principally of India. For that purpose, our Regular Army, in its present numbers, is sufficient, having regard to the extent to which it can be increased, in case of emergency, by the Reserve and Special Reserve.' Now that by itself is a very questionable proposition. With our experiences in the Boer War before us, it takes a bold man to assert that, even if we disregard altogether contingencies nearer home, our Regular Army with its present strength and its present degree of expansiveness, is certain to be adequate to any demands which may be made upon it with respect to our over-sea possessions. It did not prove adequate in the case of the Boer War. We had to supplement it, with all its Reserves and the Militia, by a number of troops hastily extemporised for the occasion, at enormous cost, and with very varying results in point of efficiency. But our Regular Army is no larger now than it was then. It has even been somewhat reduced. Neither, I think, can it be maintained

that its power of expansion is greater, for the Special Reserve—the only new feature—no more than replaces, if it does indeed replace, the old Militia. And then you must remember that the demands of the Boer War left this country practically denuded of regular troops.

Is that a position of affairs, the recurrence of which we can contemplate with equanimity? Are we content with an Army, the whole of which, and indeed more than the whole of which, may be required in some part of our vast and scattered Empire, leaving us without any regular troops at all in these islands? What is the official answer to that question? Well, I am bound to say the official answer is far from clear, but this at least is as clear as noon-day: there is no escape from this dilemma, that you must either say that the whole of our Regular Army and its Reserves is more than can possibly be required for the defence of our distant possessions, an assertion which, in view of our quite recent experience in South Africa, is patently absurd; or you must admit that our present arrangements leave us perpetually liable to be deprived of the whole of the Regular Army and its Reserves for the purpose of Home Defence. And yet it must be obvious to every one who thinks seriously of these matters, that if there is any danger—and who will maintain that there is none?—of our being involved in a life and death struggle at or near home, it is precisely in a crisis, in which our Regular Army was required in some distant region, that that danger would be most likely to arise. We were certainly very near it at the time of the Boer War, although we had then—what we have since lost—an overwhelming preponderance at sea.

And yet it is upon our strength at sea, relatively diminished as it is, that the official Pangloss always falls back when he is driven into this corner. Our Regular Army with its Reserves may be wanted in the most distant parts of the earth. The whole of it may be so wanted, as it was less than ten years ago. But what does it matter? We shall still be safe over here, for we have always got the Navy.

The Navy is our true and our sufficient Home Defence force. Well, but if that is so, why have a Territorial Army at all? Why make all these frantic appeals to the patriotism of the nation to supply us with what, on this theory, is a superfluous luxury? The official answer to that conundrum is indeed a controversial curiosity. It ought really to be embalmed for the delectation of future ages as a masterpiece of ingenious sophistry. The Territorial Army, it seems, is not there to defeat the invader. For that purpose it might not be safe to rely upon it, at any rate until it had had six months' training after the outbreak of war, which the would-be invader cannot be absolutely trusted to give it time for. It is there to frighten the invader into coming—if he comes at all—with a force of such magnitude that the Navy is bound to see him and catch him. But are we, in all seriousness, prepared to stake our national existence upon the soundness of a theory such as this? Substantially it is only a rather comical variation of the old argument with which we started, the all-sufficiency of the Navy. Look at it how you will, the apologists of our present system are always driven back to this position, that we must be supreme at sea, and that if we lost, even temporarily, the complete command of the sea, our case would be hopeless. That doctrine is, I venture to think, a dangerously exaggerated one, exaggerated in both directions. It is exaggerated in its optimism, I mean in the assumption that the absolute command of the sea is something which we can by willing it, by doubling and redoubling our expenditure on ships and armaments, under all circumstances ensure. And it is exaggerated in its pessimism, that is to say in its craven teaching that, if we lost, even partially, even temporarily, the command of the sea, we must immediately collapse. That may be our case to-day—I am afraid it is something like our case——but, if it is, it affords the strongest possible condemnation of our present system. Let us indeed by all means seek to maintain command of the sea. That must always be our main object. Let us seek it, among other things,

by ensuring to our fleets that mobility and striking power, which cannot but be gravely impaired by constant anxiety about an inadequately defended base. But do not let us for one moment admit that, if our power at sea were crippled, everything would be at an end, and we should just have to throw up our hands in despair.

It is against that idea, and against acquiescence in a policy which is based on that idea, that the National Service League emphatically protests. And, if you come to think of it, is there not something crude and unreal in this talk about command of the sea, as if it was necessarily absolute one way or the other? If you have it, all is well, if you have not got it, all is over. In how many wars has it not for a long time hung in the balance? There can be no absolute command of the sea in war unless, as at Trafalgar, or at Tsushima, the enemy's fleet is wholly annihilated; no absolute loss of it, unless your own fleet is similarly crushed. And no doubt, if the British fleet was absolutely crushed, no land force could save us, for then indeed we might be starved out, and invasion would be superfluous. But such a disaster is improbable, under present circumstances even impossible. What is likewise, I hope, improbable, but surely not impossible, having regard to the naval forces that might at no distant future be brought against us, is that the British fleet should be unable at every stage of the conflict to afford us that absolute protection on which we rely. After all, in the great struggle of a hundred years ago, it needed nothing less than Trafalgar to give us that complete protection. But assuming for one moment (one does not like even to contemplate these terrible contingencies, but it is not sensible or manly to shut our eyes to them), assuming, I say, that we met with a reverse at sea, perhaps only a partial, only a temporary reverse, which uncovered a portion of our coasts, would not, under present circumstances, invasion, and invasion in great force, almost certainly follow? It would be infinitely easier to effect to-day than it has ever been in the past; and no sane

man can think without a shudder of what invasion in force, under present circumstances, would inevitably mean. A blow struck at the heart, the dislocation of our whole national life, perhaps the capture of one or more of our naval bases, or of the workshops supplying our material of war—these would convert a check at sea, from which, if unassailable on land, we might well recover, into an all-round and irretrievable disaster. Our power of recuperation would be gone. That, to my mind, is a far more real danger than the bugbear of starvation, even if we were to continue, as we need not continue, ought not to continue, and, as I hope, will not continue, to be as largely dependent as we now are on imported food. But that is a different topic which I cannot develop to-night. I will take things as they are, and I maintain that, as they are, you would have vessels from every part of the world vying with one another to pour supplies into the British market, and it would be no such easy matter to seal up all our ports. As long as the British fleet, even if it had failed to keep complete command of the sea, was still formidable, was still, to use the technical term, 'a Fleet in Being,' the hostile fleet which, in that case, would still be threatened, could not possibly afford to detach all the ships necessary to maintain such a blockade. Any disturbance of our food supplies would no doubt be a very grave matter. It would mean a great rise in prices, and immense hardship. But such disturbance, as distinct from complete interruption, would not spell ruin: an invading army of two or three hundred thousand men almost certainly would.

Is it reasonable to leave the door wide open to such a possibility? Even if the risk were less serious than it is, why should we run it at all? What ails this nation that, with more to lose perhaps than any other, and with a stronger natural position to start with than any other, it is content to stop so far short of what other nations do for self-protection? Think of the French and Germans, with their two and a half years' military service, and their armies

of three or four million fully trained men. And here we are pottering over the training of two or three hundred thousand men for fifteen days a year, and no one knows how long we shall get even that number. We are content to leave it to chance. With the enormous advantage of our geographical position, we might be absolutely secure, safer within our seagirt borders than any nation with a great open land frontier can ever be, no matter what the extent of its military preparations. Yes, far safer, and with far less effort. But not with so little effort as we actually make. To leave the bulk of the manhood of this country without military training at all, to rely solely upon the Navy, is not to use the immense advantage of our insular position but to abuse it—to presume upon it. It is not fair to the Navy, that splendid service of which we are all proud, and which will, no doubt, do in the future as in the past, all that can reasonably be expected of it. And it would not be fair, in the case of a general European struggle, to our allies—or rather, let me say, it is not calculated to make our alliance as valuable or as desirable as it ought to be.

I dare say a critic might say to me : ' What do you mean by talking of the inadequacy of our efforts ? Do we not already spend enormous sums upon National Defence ? And are not statesmen of all parties at present agreed in contemplating the expenditure of even greater sums ? ' Yes, but here we come to the fundamental point of difference between the view of the National Service League and the once generally accepted view of National Defence. We simply do not believe that you can *buy* national safety by any expenditure of mere money, however vast. Everything is comparative in these matters. No doubt our expenditure on Defence is very great and very onerous, but so is the expenditure of other nations. It is idle to think that we can keep pace with them by the power of mere money, when they are prepared to spend not only their money but themselves.

What I want to put to you is this question : Would it

really hurt us if we were to do as they do, and rely for our ultimate security upon the personal service of our whole able-bodied manhood, irrespective of class? The question of the degree and the nature of the training which every able-bodied young man would have to undergo is not one that I can go into now. It is not, perhaps, at any time a question to be decided by civilians, but rather by military experts. But of the broad principle involved, you and I can judge as well as any soldier. I say: Would it hurt us to do as our great rivals do? Has it hurt them? I believe I am not singular, I believe I am only asserting what nine out of every ten experienced travellers will confirm, when I say that the great military nations of the Continent have not suffered but have benefited physically, morally, socially, from the training of their whole young manhood in military exercises and military discipline. War is an evil, and a tremendous evil, but military training is not. It is a positive benefit to most nations. To none that I can imagine would it be a greater benefit than to a nation which suffers so much as ours does to-day from the congestion of its people in great cities. Neither does military training, provided it is general, make for war. On the contrary, it has just the opposite effect. There have been fewer, far fewer, wars in Europe since nations in arms have been substituted for professional armies. A professional army cannot be expected to have the same aversion for war which a national army, consisting as it does mainly of men who have other pursuits, and wish nothing less than to see them interrupted, inevitably and invariably displays.

## THE CANADIAN CLUB, HALIFAX.—SEPTEMBER 26, 1912

### *Local and Imperial Politics*

[In the autumn of 1912 Lord Milner, for a second time, visited Canada, and was able on this occasion to see something of the Maritime Provinces, omitted of necessity from his itinerary of 1908—see p. 304. The following address was given before the Canadian Club of Halifax. A word on

the occasion may be helpful. Recent speeches of other visitors to Canada had been resented by some Canadians as tending to interfere in Canadian domestic politics. In saying a word on behalf both of people not perhaps quite fairly accused, and of the Canadian Club principle of free speech, Lord Milner was led to consider the possibility of a general separation of Imperial questions from party politics.]

The only drawback I know to a visit to Canada, as I think I have had occasion to remark before, is that you have a habit of taking toll of the passing stranger in the form of a speech. And received, as he is everywhere, with unfailing kindness, with boundless hospitality, it is always difficult and sometimes impossible for him to refuse. And yet this tribute is a heavy one to pay, certainly so in my own case.

And now a fresh terror is added to what is to me a sufficiently alarming process. I gather from the newspapers that there have been quite a number of people, especially political people, from Great Britain travelling over here this year. And they have been making speeches (often no doubt, like myself, under compulsion) and some of these speeches have not given satisfaction to some people—not an altogether surprising fact, for I never did know a speech which pleased everybody, unless it was entirely vapid.

It seems to me that the great merit of the Canadian Clubs is that they afford an open forum for men of the most various pursuits and the most different views, and that it is best to allow any man who is privileged to address them to speak on his own subject, on what he knows best and what interests him most. In doing so he may, if he is a politician, express very decided opinions. Surely this need not in any way detract from what I of all men esteem most highly, and should, if it were my business, fight to the death to uphold, namely the absolutely neutral, impartial, non-partisan character of the Club as a club. That is perfectly maintained by doing as you already do, and giving the same courteous reception and patient hearing to speakers of opposite opinions.

It is, of course, possible that some tactless person may

abuse your hospitality, and at the same time throw away the golden chance—and for a politician it is a rare luxury—of being able to speak before an unbiassed audience, by stating his case extravagantly, intemperately, or by venturing on ground which he had better avoid—for instance, if he is a British speaker, by taking or appearing to take sides on Canadian political issues, which he probably does not understand, and which any way are no business of his. But such errors of judgment are, I fancy, not likely to be common. And if they do occur, as they will occur from time to time—for we are all fallible mortals, and the best of us may stumble, especially on strange ground—it is not necessary to make a tragedy of it. Such a tactless speaker hurts himself, he hurts his own cause, but he does not hurt you or Canada. You can afford to show indulgence to a little indiscretion, and on the whole it is better that foolish people should be allowed to make, and haply learn by making mistakes, than that all people, wise and foolish, should be muzzled, or should be so frightened of saying the wrong thing that they cannot speak their minds with frankness and sincerity.

Now I think it is not unimportant to come to a good understanding on this point in view of what surely lies before us in the future. I believe we all desire, people of all political parties in every part of the Empire, the development of closer relations between the different states, widely separated as they are geographically, of which that Empire is composed. Sprung, most of us, from a common stock, bound together by ties of race, of history, of tradition, united, all of us, in the desire to maintain certain great principles of freedom and good government, we long to get over, or at least to minimise to the greatest possible extent, the physical obstacles which impede our intercourse with one another. To aid us in that we have, in our own times, the shrinkage of the world which is due to the wonderful modern developments of science. And we are only at the beginning of that process. There is a great deal more to be done. To take only one instance, I should

be sorry to think that we shall long rest content with the still very imperfect means of communication by steamer between Great Britain and these Maritime Provinces. This is a personal grievance. The other day, when I wanted to come to Halifax, I was given the choice of going round by Boston or going round by Rimouski. I am getting on in life, I am sorry to say, but I still hope to live to come on some future occasion in four or five days straight to Nova Scotia. The possibilities of increased trade between different parts of the Empire are stupendous, and it is the duty of statesmen to do all in their power to develop them. But it is not only the interchange of material things on which our minds are set: there is a higher side to this ideal of closer intercourse. It is the interchange of men, the interchange of ideas. 'Multi pertransibunt et augebitur scientia.' 'Many will pass to and fro and knowledge will be increased'—including that most precious kind of knowledge—our knowledge of one another. Every year more and more Canadian voices are heard in Great Britain, more British voices are heard in Canada. And this is true, though necessarily as yet in a less degree, of speakers from other British communities. Only the other day some of you listened here, and I am very glad of it, to a distinguished Australian speaker, to whom I have myself often listened with pleasure.

Now all this is immensely to our mutual advantage. But it is a law of life in this imperfect world—and perhaps in any conceivable world—that there is no gain without some loss. And so it happens that this on the whole enormously beneficent increase of intercourse is not without some drawbacks. When so much is being said, the wrong thing will sometimes be said, and there will be occasion for offence and misunderstanding. But is it not possible for us all to try not too readily to take offence? Is it not better to set down remarks, to which we may perhaps quite legitimately object, to ignorance or maladroitness rather than to evil intent or deliberate discourtesy? Let us remember that such occasional rubs are inevitable accom-

paniments of that closer intercourse, of which we all recognise the immense value. By all means let us try to avoid treading on one another's toes. But it is better that we should occasionally tread on one another's toes than that we should always remain at a respectful but wholly unprofitable distance from one another.

You see there are a great many things which we people of British stock have got to get into the habit of talking over quite frankly with one another, on a basis of perfect equality, without too much local sensitiveness, and with a single eye to the security and greatness—true greatness I mean, not only national strength—of our common Empire. Some of these problems are very very difficult in themselves. Do not let us make them more so by being touchy, or by troubling ourselves overmuch, whether a particular remark of A's or B's was the sort of remark which it was quite correct, constitutional and decorous—and all the other things one has got to be—for him to make at the particular time and on the particular occasion when he did make it.

The great thing after all is to get something done, something to defend and promote those common interests of all parts of the Empire, of which we have begun to realise the magnitude and the transcendent importance. And here I may say that, if I am not mistaken, a great change has in recent years come over the Imperial question. A great development of opinion has taken place, even in the four years since I was last in this country, and the task before the workers in this field, a body of which I claim to be a very old if very humble member, is quite different to-day from what it was even as lately as the beginning of the present century. Time was when it was our principal business to try and make people realise, not specially in this country—the apathy and indifference were just as prevalent in Great Britain itself—that there was such a thing as an Imperial problem, and to point out that the several independent states under the British Crown were strangely lacking in cohesion, in organisation for common

action, and consequently in that strength and security which cohesion and organisation alone can give. But now all that is changed. It is no longer necessary to awaken interest in the subject. Imperial sentiment is active and growing. The problem of this and the immediately future years is to direct that force into profitable channels. We all want to help one another. The question is, what is the best way to do it? Certainly the way not to do it is to allow the question to get mixed up with the local political controversies, which divide parties in every one of the self-governing communities of the Empire. That it should get so mixed up is a real danger, and it is one which we ought frankly to recognise, in order that we may be on our guard against it.

Now this danger would not exist, or at any rate it would be greatly minimised, if there was a recognised line of demarcation between local and Imperial politics, as there is, at any rate here in Canada, between provincial and national questions, and if there were separate authorities for dealing with the one and the other. This consideration points to the creation of a new body, distinct from all existing organs of Government and representative of all parts of the Empire, to which the management of Imperial affairs should be entrusted. To that solution we may ultimately come, but we are not there yet, and the intervening period is the period of danger. For in that intervening period common action with regard to Imperial affairs can only be achieved by agreement between a number of governments, each one of which is a party government, exposed to constant attack from the opposite party, and is it too much to hope that the course which in the interest of the Empire it ought to take, and might wish to take, will also always be the course seemingly most calculated to serve its paramount purpose, that of keeping itself in power.

Is there any way out of the difficulties which this condition of things presents? I must honestly admit that I can see no certain way. It has been suggested here in

Canada that there should be an agreement between the leaders on both sides to keep Imperial questions, or a particular question of that nature, outside party strife. Certainly I sympathise with that idea, and in any one state at any one time it may, as I am sure I hope that in your case it will, succeed. But, you see, what is wanted is something much more than that. It is a permanent agreement between the leaders of political parties, not in one state but in all the states concerned, and applying not to one question but to all questions of a certain character. And that, I think, is rather Utopian. But the case is not therefore hopeless, even in the present rudimentary condition of our Imperial machinery. What the politicians cannot do of themselves, they may be forced to do, and (to be fair to them) be forced to do in many cases not unwillingly, by the steady permanent pressure of public opinion, if it is only strong enough.

Do not tell me this is impossible, for I have actually seen it done. In the Mother Country, where the excesses of party spirit are quite as bad as they are here, there is one subject of the greatest national importance which has for fully ten years past been entirely, or almost entirely, kept out of the arena of party strife, and that is the subject of foreign policy. In my young days there was nothing about which parties in Great Britain quarrelled more fiercely, more disastrously. In future it will be very difficult to go back to that bad old game of fighting among ourselves over the attitude we are to adopt towards foreign nations. No doubt there will be lapses, but on the whole we are getting, in this matter, into a purer atmosphere. And yet the conduct of foreign affairs offers—it always must offer—unrivalled opportunities to an Opposition for embarrassing a Ministry. Why are these opportunities nowadays comparatively so seldom made use of in Great Britain? The reason is simple. It is that, with regard to this question, factiousness no longer pays. I do not say the Opposition do not criticise or ought not to criticise. But any man versed in public affairs can at once recognise

the difference between reasonable criticism and factious opposition. And that sort of opposition to a foreign policy, which has been pretty steadily followed for a considerable time by Ministries of both parties—the attempt to use a particular embarrassment incidental to that policy for the purpose of turning a government out—would nowadays be so unpopular that no wise party leader would encourage it. 'What man has done man can do,' and if this has been possible in Great Britain with regard to foreign policy during more than ten years of furious party fighting, it must be possible in all parts of the Empire with regard to questions affecting the preservation and the welfare of the Empire as a whole. And in some ways it is easier to achieve such a desirable result, where there are a number of separate communities all confronted with the same problem, and conscious of a common obligation to deal with it. There is a certain competition between them as to which will show itself capable of dealing with that problem most effectively. If in any one state of the Empire a question like Imperial Defence were to be degraded into the occasion for a party fight, and consequently made a mess of, that state would come to be regarded as a discredit to the Imperial family. And no state would like to appear in that light.

The line of advance here indicated may be poor comfort for ardent spirits. It may not satisfy them. I do not say it satisfies me. But I am getting old, and I have learnt to be patient. If we can only get some move on now, and a move in the right direction, we must make the best of it, even if the first step is not a very long one, and if there are a good many jolts and bumps on the road.

Mind you, I put great stress on that condition: any move must be in the right direction. Whatever is done, in this matter of the Navy for instance, let it be done for the right reasons, and done on lines which will make a further advance on the road of Imperial Union possible at a later date. Some people in this Dominion are inclined to say: 'Let us do something quickly and have done with it.' And I

too say, do something quickly, but don't imagine that you will ever have done with it. If the Empire is your Empire as much as ours, then your participation in the defence of it, and in the control of it, which is now, I hope, beginning, can never have an end as long as the Empire itself endures. I appreciate the generous sentiment which says 'the Mother Country has an awfully tough job to carry alone the burden of Empire: let us do something to help her.' That is excellent as far as it goes, but it does not go far enough. It is not from gratitude, or at any rate not only from gratitude, but from reasoned conviction, not for her—for the Mother Country—or at least not only for the Mother Country, but for the sake of the greater whole, of which both Great Britain and Canada are simply parts, that whatever you may do should be done.

For my own part I rejoiced greatly, as I believe the vast majority of people in Great Britain rejoiced, at Mr. Borden's declaration that Canada did not mean to be an adjunct even of the Mother Country. And on this vital point I am glad to think that there is no room for difference between Canadian parties, if your leading statesmen truly represent the popular mind. For this is in essence just the same as what Sir Wilfrid Laurier had said on a previous occasion, when he used the memorable words, 'If you want our help, call us to your councils.' If this is the spirit in which Canadians approach the question, they will find the people of Great Britain prepared to meet them more than half-way. Any British Government which failed to respond to such an advance, and to respond to it whole-heartedly, would very soon find itself out of office. If the hearts of the two peoples beat in unison, woe to the statesman, no not the statesman, but the misguided politician, who ventured to stand in the way.

## AUTHORS CLUB.—December 2, 1912

### *Empire Citizenship*

It is a great honour to be invited to initiate a discussion at the Authors Club. At the same time I must admit to you that the choice of a topic has caused me no little perplexity. It has been suggested to me, quite privately and unofficially, that an appropriate subject for one who, like myself, has at one time been a writer for the Press, and at another time, and for a much longer period, an Imperial official, would be 'Journalism and the Empire.' Well, gentlemen, I do not know that there is any coherent series of ideas which I feel capable of arranging under that heading. I will ask you to give me a little more latitude than that theme, as I understand it, would afford. But I take the hint to this extent, that I will confine my remarks to one aspect of the great subject of Imperial Union, an aspect often neglected, but which should, I think, appeal especially to men of letters, and therefore—as the greater includes the less—to all journalists who take a high view, and it is the only right view, of their profession.

Let me define what I mean by Imperial Union. I mean something which at present does not exist, or exists only in an embryonic or rudimentary form. I mean a real Empire State with its necessary concomitant, an Empire citizenship. Many people, I know, and even many people who are very far from being out of sympathy with all Imperial ideals, do not regard that as the true line of development. They look forward rather to a progressive relaxation of the political bonds, such as they are, which at present hold the Empire together, to a union, or rather a relationship, maintained solely by ties of sympathy and affection. Whether they think such a development desirable, or simply inevitable, I am not quite clear. But at any rate I differ from them. I think that the tendency is, and that it ought to be, in another direction, that is to say, towards closer organic union. My ideal is a common

citizenship, which is something different from, something more than, a sense of blood-relationship and a community of language and sentiment, such as may exist, and happily often does exist, between peoples belonging to different bodies-politic, as for instance between the Austrian Germans and the Germans of the German Empire, or the British people and the people of the United States.

But I am not going to-night to enter into any controversy on this subject, or to attempt to compare the merits of these different ideals. I simply want to dwell, and that very briefly, upon one feature of Imperial Union—in my sense of that phrase—which is frequently forgotten. When the advocates of a United Empire sum up its advantages, they dwell mainly on two points. The first is the greater strength and security which would result if all the military and naval forces of the Empire, present and future, were controlled by a single authority. The second is the economic argument for Union, well expressed by an American friend of mine who, contemplating, as a friendly outsider, the varied and mutually complementary resources of different parts of the Empire, summed it up as 'a first-rate business proposition.' And certainly I should be the last man to question the immense importance of either of these considerations. But that is not the whole story. Even in an era of universal peace, even if not only wars but tariff wars were to be absolutely abandoned, I should still remain an Imperialist. I should still want my country to be the greatest in the world, by which I do not mean the biggest. It is not mere size that I am thinking of, though size has its value. No, but greatest, let me say, in the amplitude and variety of its resources, and in that which material resources are only the means to, in its civilisation, its achievement, the spirit and character of its people.

Yes. But what is my country? An easy question, you might think, to answer. And so it is for most members of the human race. But it is not altogether so easy for any subject of His Majesty King George v. May I be allowed

to say how I personally should be disposed to answer it? The fine saying 'the Empire is my country' is not a phrase of my coining, though it precisely expresses what I feel. It is the phrase of a Canadian Imperialist, who is not a less loyal or devoted Canadian on that account. I can see, as Mr. Balfour well said the other night, no antagonism whatever between the two patriotisms. The Germans have a good expression to meet a somewhat similar situation. They talk of the 'narrower' and the 'wider' Fatherland, meaning by the former Prussia or Saxony or Bavaria, or whatever it may be, and by the latter the whole German Empire. That seems to me, *mutatis mutandis*, to be applicable to our own case. My hope is that a day may come when the words 'the Empire is my country' will not be a hard saying to any civilised man, I don't care what the colour of his skin, in any part of it; when those words will express his real feeling; when, over and above his local and racial patriotism, he will recognise that his highest allegiance is to the Empire as a whole. To that end it is necessary, at least in my view, that the Empire should be a real State, and not merely a number of separate, more or less closely associated communities under a common sovereign. Obviously we are still very far from such a condition of things, though, as I have said, I believe the tendency is towards it and not away from it. But my point is this, that its attainment is desirable, nay more, that it is the highest of all possible objects of political endeavour, not only for the sake of greater strength and security, or of ampler and better assured economic development, but for a higher reason still, for the sake of what I can only call the greater spiritual content of the wider patriotism.

Let me illustrate what I mean by this somewhat too abstract and not very happily worded statement. What, after all, do we mean by patriotism? Without being too metaphysical, I suppose that a feeling of pride in one's country, a sense of the privilege of belonging to a land of 'just and old renown,' with a great history and great

traditions, and the resulting desire and impulse to preserve and haply enhance that heritage—these things surely are of the essence of patriotism. And among the nobler motives of human action it is one of the most potent, and, despite its occasional excesses, one of the most beneficent. But patriotism is a rope of many strands, and the various elements which make it up appeal in very different proportions to different minds. With one man it is the heroism of our warriors and explorers; with another the genius of our great writers; with another the beauty of the land itself, enhanced by the art and care of many generations; with yet another its contribution to human progress in raising the standard of justice and humanity, and in setting an example of orderly freedom and constitutional government, which does most to nourish his pride in, and attachment to, his country. But among the numerous influences which combine to create and sustain that noble pride and attachment, in us Britons, it is surely impossible not to assign a very high place to respect for the efforts and sacrifices which have built up the Empire. There are many blots on the pages of history which record that achievement, as there are on its other pages. But when all the crimes and follies have been subtracted, there remains an immense balance on the right side. It is we who have been foremost in opening up the great waste spaces of the New World, and filling them with peoples of a high standard of civilisation. It is we who have brought peace and justice, and given orderly and humane government, to hundreds of millions of the weaker or more backward races of the earth, and put an end to the secular welter of bloodshed and oppression. These new lands of immense promise inhabited by men of our race, these ancient lands restored to order and civilisation by our agency, are the two great moral assets of Imperialism. It is this aspect of the Empire, not its size nor the number of its inhabitants, nor the sum of its imports and exports, which gives dignity to the wider patriotism, which makes it such a source of inspiration and such a stimulus to lofty effort. Would it

be the same thing, should we be the same people, if the Empire were only a memory, a glorious tradition of the past, and our political horizon were bounded by the shores of these islands ?

Now what I have just said was spoken from the point of view of one whose ' narrower Fatherland ' is the United Kingdom. How does all this look from the other side ? Can the idea of Imperial patriotism, the sense of membership of the Empire, have the same depth of meaning, be the same source of inspiration to the Canadian or Australian as to the Englishman, Irishman or Scotsman ? Why should it not ? The men who made the Empire were their ancestors as much as yours or mine. The call to maintain and improve it, the whole of it, not only one's own particular corner, is as loud to them as it is to you and me. They may not always have responded to it, and very naturally, for distance and the mass of work immediately confronting them in huge new countries, absorbing as it did all their energy and interest, have had their narrowing effect. Immediate needs were so many and urgent, the local horizon was so vast, that it is no wonder that they could not look, as many of them still cannot look, beyond it. But even then Imperial feeling was only latent ; it was not dead. From time to time it showed unmistakable signs of vitality. And now that distance is so greatly diminished by the triumphs of science, that the most urgent needs of civilised life have been supplied, and that with the growth of prosperity there is more leisure, more culture, more interest in other than purely material things, the development of the wider patriotism is likely to assume proportions which very few of us have dreamt of. Indeed it would not surprise me if in the near future that sentiment were to become a more potent force in the over-sea Dominions than it is here. And if that does come about, it will not be solely, or mainly, from a sense of the material advantages of the Imperial connection. It will not be solely, or mainly, because the over-sea Briton feels the need of protection against external aggression (which in many cases he does not), or

because he appreciates the preference which he actually enjoys in the money market of Great Britain, and may perhaps hope to enjoy some day in other markets also. These influences exist, no doubt, and they count for something. But there is another spirit at work which counts for more. It is his feeling of pride in his birthright, in his membership of a great, a historic and a world-wide State, so various in the character of its different parts, so rich in opportunities, with so imposing a record in the past, and such illimitable possibilities in the future. And that feeling will take the form of a claim, a claim the justice of which is indisputable, not only for the entire control of his local affairs—he has got that already—but for a voice in the control of Imperial affairs. Of course such aspirations, if they are to be realised, involve a complete overhauling of our present chaotic system, and the creation of an Imperial constitution. But that is just what the Imperialism of the Dominions, if it follows the line which I have indicated, is going to bring about.

Only one more remark in conclusion. I may be told that what I have just said, if true at all, can only be true of that portion of the inhabitants of the Empire who are of British race. But the people of British race are not a majority even in all the self-governing Dominions, whilst in India and the other dependencies they are only an infinitesimal fraction of the population. The rest, it may be said, can have no attachment to the Empire other than that arising from a sense of the material advantages which it secures to them. There can be no question in their case of the growth of Imperial patriotism. Well, I am aware that that is the common, as it is the natural, view. But I am not at all sure that it is the right view. Certainly I am the last person to question the importance of the racial bond. Without it there would be no British Empire. But I do not admit that Imperial patriotism of a kind may not be developed among the races that are not of British origin. Perhaps it will never be of the fervid type, but to say that is not to say that it must be based on purely material con-

siderations. Given complete equality of status with their British fellow-countrymen, they may not be insensible of the dignity of their position as citizens of the Empire, or unwilling to share in its burdens and its glory. I can imagine the French Canadians, for instance, under certain conditions, becoming in this sense quite sound Imperialists, as some of them are already. Indeed, I go further. It would be a mistake to undervalue the attachment to the Empire which undoubtedly exists even among the subject races of India and Africa, however crude and childlike may be, must be in the majority of the people, their conception of what the Empire is. I have certainly had occasion myself to realise the strength of that sentiment in some of the African tribes, and I believe that it exists—though here I do not speak from personal experience—in the mass of the people of India. No doubt among a portion of the educated classes of that country there is not only no feeling of attachment to the Empire, but on the contrary indifference, estrangement, even bitter hostility. But even if these feelings were more widespread among them than, as far as I can judge, they actually are, I should still not despair of the future of Imperial patriotism in India. Changes, which are bound gradually to come about in the government of that country—changes giving a wider scope to native ability and ambition—coupled with what I for one hope for, though I know how difficult it is to accomplish—a complete removal of the disabilities and indignities to which even the most highly civilised Indians are at present liable in some of the white communities of the Empire—would, I am convinced, effect a momentous change in Indian sentiment.

But here I touch on the fringe of a very thorny problem, and I have already detained you too long, and raised more than enough points of controversy for a single evening. Let me only say, that I consider it a great privilege to have been allowed to engage, for much longer, I fear, than the statutory period, the attention of the Authors Club, and that I hope the ideas which I have put before you, though

perhaps rather nebulously expressed, will not be found unworthy of a place in your thoughts and in your sympathies.

## EAST LONDON.—DECEMBER 9, 1912

### *The Two Nations*

[An addressed delivered at Toynbee Hall.]

IT is eighteen years since I last addressed an audience in Toynbee Hall, and during almost the whole of that time my business in life has removed me very far from the kind of activities which centre in this institution, though I have never lost my interest in them. Only quite recently, since the Council did me the honour to elect me their chairman, have I begun to take up again the threads of an old acquaintance. I feel that I have too little experience in that position to be entitled to speak in any representative capacity. If anything I may say to-night appears to you unsuitable or wide of the mark, you must hold me alone responsible. The last thing I wish to do is to commit my colleagues or the members of this Association by what is merely an expression of my individual feelings and opinions.

There are various points of view from which the work of this or any similar Settlement may be regarded. It appeals to different people on different grounds. I shall confine myself to one aspect of it which appeals most strongly to me personally, without wishing to suggest that there are not other and perhaps more important aspects. The object of the Universities Settlement Association is defined in the Memorandum as follows :—

> 'To provide education and the means of recreation and enjoyment for the people of the poorer districts of London and other great cities: to inquire into the condition of the poor, and to consider and advance plans calculated to promote their welfare.'

No one can deny that these are excellent and very comprehensive objects. And yet I do not know that they

cover all the ground. I should like to add one other paragraph—not at all inconsistent with the words I have just read, but rather supplementary to them—a paragraph somewhat to this effect :

'To provide a meeting-place and opportunities for better mutual knowledge and sympathy between people of different classes and occupations, and to strengthen in them all the sense of their common citizenship.'

A great statesman and writer, Benjamin Disraeli, gave to one of his novels, *Sybil*, which appeared about seventy years ago, the sub-title *The Two Nations*. The idea which prompted that title, in itself a very familiar idea, as old as the hills, was the contrast between the extremes of wealth and poverty and the estrangement of class from class. This contrast, great enough in every age, in every civilised country, was exceptionally strong in England when *Sybil* was written, and the consequent resentment and spirit of revolt appeared to many even cool-headed observers to threaten a cataclysm. I am convinced myself that there has been, in the interval which has elapsed since the publication of *Sybil*, a great change for the better in economic and social conditions—not that the contrast presented by the extremes is any less glaring, but because there is so much more between the extremes, and the proportion, if not the actual numbers, of people living in really degrading poverty, has been greatly reduced. But I don't know that the estrangement of class from class has been correspondingly diminished. The idea of *The Two Nations*—always of course a literary generalisation : it could not have stood scientific analysis at any time—has as strong a hold upon the minds of men, and perhaps as large an element of truth, as it ever had. If you look, for instance, at a book like Mr. Stephen Reynolds's *Seems So*, an interesting and able record of personal experience, you will be struck by its insistence on the growth of a class consciousness among all those who live by the work of their hands in the most various industries, on their collective sense of the injustice

of the present social order, and on the barrier which that sentiment creates between them and the rest of their fellow-countrymen. A somewhat similar, but much more bitter and exasperated state of feeling, is described in my friend Mr. Fabian Ware's recent book, *The Worker and his Country*, as existing in France. And the evidences of it are numerous and strong in almost all civilised countries.

No doubt the conception of *The Two Nations* in its modern form differs somewhat from that of Disraeli. The contrast, the antagonism, is now not so much between Wealth and Poverty as between all wage-earners, many of whom are raised far above the level of poverty, and all those who derive their income from property, interest or profits, many of whom again are far from rich. But whatever the form of it, good citizens must deplore the existence, or the belief in the existence, of two nations in one country. Enmity between nations is bad, but enmity between sections of the same nation is worse. I am not one of those who think that what is known as the solidarity of the workers of all nations, the substitution of class divisions for national or racial divisions, is going to ensure international peace or to promote the happiness of mankind. I believe in development on national lines, and I believe in the mission of my country, of the British race—that it stands for something distinctive and priceless in the onward march of humanity. My chief reason for detesting any form of social cleavage, I don't say it is my only reason, is that it weakens my country. Among civilised peoples of more or less equal size, that one will be, as it will deserve to be, the strongest, which is most successful in removing the causes of class antagonism in its midst. It will be the least vulnerable by external aggression, the most capable of influencing the future development of the world. It will take the lead in the rivalry, not necessarily a hostile rivalry, of nations, which, with all its deplorable excesses, is one of the greatest factors in human progress.

We are all familiar with one panacea for class antagonism, which is the abolition of classes—all property public property,

every child born in the country born to an equal right to and an equal share in it. Ideas of this kind also are of a most venerable antiquity. Some people, looking back over the centuries, and seeing how long they have existed and how little has come of them, regard them as wholly impracticable or even as mischievous delusions. Others still think that their realisation is within measurable distance. Very likely both opinions are represented in this room. I am not going to plunge into that controversy, or any controversy if I can help it, to-night. But perhaps I may carry all, or almost all of my audience with me when I say that this ideal, if attainable at all, is only attainable as the result of a long process; that it presupposes an immense change, which must necessarily be very gradual, in the whole mental and moral attitude of the average man; and that, without such a change, the collectivist millennium, if by some miracle it could be realised to-morrow, would never endure. And as I am neither a prophet nor a philosopher, I prefer to confine myself to what can be done here and now, and to speak from the standpoint of those who, accepting provisionally the present structure of society, disbelieving in revolution, but believing in the possibility of a gradual elevation of the moral standard of the community, are prepared to trust to that for the improvement of social conditions. Less and less, I think, as one grows older, is one disposed to pin one's faith on drastic political action, more and more to trust to moral influences for the advancement of the mass of the people. As I look back on the progress, great though inadequate, which has undoubtedly been made in many directions even in my own lifetime, it seems to me that what has been wrested by pressure and threats is not comparable to what has been conceded by the awakened conscience of those in possession. Many fortresses of privilege have fallen because their defenders had lost faith in the justice of their own cause. And, on the other hand, what the nation as a whole has gained from the abandonment of privilege, from the greater diffusion of political power or of material prosperity, must be measured by the degree in

which these new advantages have been turned to good account. Better wages, more leisure, easier access to knowledge, may all be used or abused. Broadly speaking, I think it may be said that the working classes of Great Britain—at any rate the great central mass—have shown themselves capable of making good use of whatever they have won. If I am right in that view, it is inevitable—as inevitable as it is greatly to be desired—that the influences which have carried them thus far, will carry them still further. I have no time to give many illustrations. But perhaps I may be allowed in this place to refer to what the wage-earners have done for themselves in the way of making use of increased educational facilities. The Workers Educational Association is becoming a power in the land, and doing more, I believe, for genuine mental culture among its members than all the year-long efforts of well-intentioned outsiders. There is thus a great deal of material on both sides for better mutual understanding and sympathy. If the wage-earners could recognise what they have owed to the finer spirits among the powerful, the wealthy and the highly educated; if the majority of the well-to-do, instead of seeing only the worse side of the upward struggle of the working classes, could learn to appreciate the nucleus of civic virtue which is to be found in their increased self-respect and self-reliance, in their capacity for sticking together, and in their longing for a less narrow and monotonous life, it would go a long way to make us a more united people. I do not say that this is all that is required —far from it—to break down the barrier between class and class, but at any rate it would be a good beginning. We should have created an atmosphere more favourable than the present to the gradual acceptance of those social changes, which are still necessary if we are to remove the reproach that we are two nations. We should have much more fraternity at any rate, though we might still be very far from equality. But then I am not sure that perfect equality of material conditions is such a desirable goal after all. I can conceive a state of things in which—with the disappear-

ance of degrading poverty and of the grosser cases of inequality of remuneration—the problem of the distribution of wealth would no longer be the obsession which it at present is to many minds. We should not worry so much about it. We should think less of the differences of fortune which still remained, and more of those things which we could all enjoy in common, the higher goods of life, which need no great wealth for their attainment. The beauties of nature and art, the wonders of science, the vast treasure-house of good literature now so easily accessible, are all such common ground. Love for these things always makes for social peace and harmony, just as exclusive attention to the purely material side of life always makes for bitterness and discord. And among these supreme things, which we all have in common, you must allow me to place our national history and our great national heritage —all the heroism, all the genius, all the enterprise, the endurance, the labour, the devotion, which have gone to make our country what it is; her triumphs in the domains of art and science; her leadership in the cause of justice, freedom and humanity; the position of immense power and influence which she holds in the world, and the duties which that position involves. Are not these the common possession, as they should be the common pride and common stimulus to high endeavour, of every man and woman in this land?

Is all I have just said too Utopian? I admit I have been talking ideals, but idealism of some kind, not necessarily mine, is in keeping with the atmosphere of this place. The man whose name it bears was an idealist if ever there was one. But he was also a very practical reformer. He had high aims, but he was penetrated with the conviction that nothing was more sterile than mere vague enthusiasm. Nothing—so he thought—could be accomplished in the way of social progress without knowledge, first-hand personal knowledge, of the particular conditions with which you were dealing, and, above all, of the habits of mind of the people you wished to influence. Intimate intercourse between men of different environment—the employer and the workman, the student and the

man of affairs—intercourse devoid of patronage or condescension, was what he believed in and practised. And it never occurred to him that the benefit was anything but mutual. I do not doubt that those who have followed in his footsteps here have been impressed with the truth of his ideas. They believe that they have something to give to East London. But I think the most successful of them would be the readiest to say that they get more than they give—an acquaintance, not to be gained from books, with the actual life of large classes of their fellow-countrymen, and with ways of looking at things with which they were previously unfamiliar. But knowledge begets sympathy, and sympathy is the golden key which opens a way to the solution of many problems that are a hopeless puzzle to the mere theorist and book-man. Political economy, as it was taught in my youth, could never have emanated from the minds of men in actual touch with the people. It was the product of the study and the counting-house. If our methods of handling economic and social problems have become humanised, and promise a richer harvest of results, that change is largely due to sociological workshops such as this, and to the influence of the men who have graduated in them.

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